



May 11, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

The United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) is recognized by the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee as the National Governing Body for equestrian sport in the United States under the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act, a federal statute. USEF also serves as the USA National Federation under the Fédération Équestre Internationale, the international federation for equestrian sport, designated by the International Olympic Committee.

The USEF works with USEF-licensed competition organizers to promote equestrian events, provide responsible oversight and management expertise to organizers, and protect the safety and welfare of athletes and their horses. The USEF represents 29 different equestrian breeds and disciplines, ensuring fairness, safety, and enjoyment of horse sports for over 185,000 members. The USEF licenses more than 2,300 competitions annually, promulgates the rules by which these breeds and disciplines function, operates a well-respected equine anti-doping program, and licenses over 2,200 officials who judge and steward competitions nationwide, and internationally.

Ensuring the safety and welfare of our members and their equine partners is the top priority for the USEF. As such, we have been at the forefront of developing programs to protect our athletes and their horses in competition. Equestrians are well-known for their dedication and commitment to their community and their willingness to make the sacrifices necessary to ensure the safety and welfare of fellow equestrians and their horses.

Additionally, the USEF has extensive experience working with federal, state, and local government agencies to mitigate risks associated with equine infectious diseases. This has been evidenced by the USEF community's united response to manage and mitigate past equine infectious disease outbreaks which have presented similarly devastating consequences for horses as the COVID-19 virus is now presenting for humans.

The USEF recently released its [Licensed Competitions COVID-19 Toolkit](#) that features the [USEF COVID-19 Action Plan](#) outlining mandatory requirements and recommended best practices for organizers and participants as they prepare for a safe return to USEF-licensed competitions. Equestrian competitions by nature require comprehensive pre-planning to be successful, including risk management, especially in this time of the COVID-19 pandemic. Where state and local regulations permit, there are competition organizers across the country who are preparing to operate USEF-licensed competitions starting June 1, 2020. These competitions will be monitored by the USEF for compliance with the requirements of the USEF Action Plan. The USEF Action Plan mandates that USEF-licensed competitions operate in full compliance with all federal, state, and local requirements as well as World Health Organization (WHO) recommendations and Centers for Disease Control guidelines.

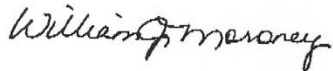


I am writing to request that as you and your team are developing plans for easing restrictions and opening businesses in your state or jurisdiction, that you allow the work of USEF to influence a decision to permit equestrian competitions to resume operations.

There are experienced organizers throughout the nation who are ready and able to operate competitions under the USEF Action Plan. Prior to the start of a USEF-licensed competition, a thorough risk assessment must be performed utilizing the WHO Risk Assessment Tool for Sporting Events, in collaboration with local public health officials. The USEF will continue to work closely with our event organizers to ensure that USEF-licensed competitions operate responsibly in this current environment.

We greatly appreciate the efforts that you and your team are making to safeguard all residents as you responsibly open the state or your local area for business. Thank you for your consideration of the USEF Action Plan in your decision-making process to permit equestrian competitions to resume operations.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "William J. Moroney". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

William J. Moroney
Chief Executive Officer



USEF Licensed Competition Information and Resources

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US Equestrian Federation

COVID-19 Action Plan

Requirements and Recommendations for Operating USEF-Licensed Competitions in the COVID-19 Environment

Effective May 05, 2020

Revised: December 8, 2020



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A. Purpose & Scope

The US Equestrian Federation is dedicated to ensuring the safety and welfare of horses and all participants. As we navigate the “new normal” at USEF competitions and events, we have centralized the requirements and recommendations from public health experts that will be in effect at USEF competitions. While there is no way to eliminate all risks related to COVID-19, the following requirements and recommendations are aimed to decrease the risk of COVID-19 infection. These requirements and recommendations are intended to ensure USEF organizers and participants are following the most recent guidance from federal, state, and other public health officials. As that guidance continues to change, the content of this action plan will be modified to reflect those changes. ***It is important to note that local public health authorities may impose more restrictive actions than those listed within this document.***

These requirements and recommendations for operating USEF-licensed competitions are in effect immediately and until further notice, however, they are subject to modification as the guidance from the government and public health officials’ changes.

We are all in this together and the situation requires that each and every one of us take personal responsibility for the health, safety, and welfare of ourselves, our family members, and our colleagues and peers in the competition environment. Whether participant, competition organizer and staff, or vendor and support personnel, we each need to exercise caution, take precautionary measures, be accountable, and utilize good judgement at all times while interacting with one another at competitions.

US Equestrian will continue to monitor the situation, consult with you and make adjustments as warranted. For the latest information regarding the outbreak, please visit the [USEF Coronavirus Disease Resources and Updates](#) web page. For additional tools and resources specific to competition organizers, please visit the [Competition Safety and Biosecurity](#) webpage and reference the Additional Resources page at the end of this document.

****Attention FEI Competition Organizers: Click [here](#) to access the FEI Policy for Enhanced Competition Safety during the COVID-19 Pandemic, effective July 1, 2020, and updated August 27, 2020.**



B. Key Contacts – for Competition Organizers & Participants

| Subject | Contact | Email | Phone |
|--|--------------------|--|----------------|
| Competitions <i>(including licensing, scheduling, modifications, date changes, COVID-19 incident reporting, etc.)</i> | Katlynn Sacco | ksacco@usef.org | (859) 225-6981 |
| Compliance <i>(including any questions related to the protocols outlined in this document)</i> | Debbie Saliling | dsaliling@usef.org | (859) 225-6930 |
| | | | |
| Licensed Officials | Alina Brazzil | abrazzil@usef.org | (859) 225-2044 |
| Drugs & Medications | Stephen Schumacher | sschumacher@usef.org | (859) 225-2075 |

Additional Resources for Organizers & Participants

| Subject | Contact | Email | Phone |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|--|----------------|
| FEI Sport | Will Connell | wconnell@usef.org | (859) 225-7682 |
| National Sport - Breed or Discipline | Terri Dolan | tdolan@usef.org | (859) 225-6957 |
| Marketing & Communication | Vicki Lowell | vlowell@usef.org | (859) 225-2024 |
| Finance | Codie Mott | cmott@usef.org | (859) 225-6933 |
| Information Technology | Justin Provost | jprovost@usef.org | (859) 225-6905 |
| General Counsel | Sonja Keating | skeating@usef.org | (859) 225-2045 |
| CEO | Bill Moroney | bmoroney@usef.org | (859) 225-6912 |



C. Definitions

CDC – Centers for Disease Control. All activity that occurs at a USEF-licensed competition must be conducted in accordance with CDC guidance protocols.

Competition Area/Schooling Area - For purposes of this document, any reference to competition area and/or schooling area includes rings, arenas, fields, cross-country fields, and any other areas designated for competition, schooling or exercise purposes.

Competition Organizer – For purposes of this document, Competition Organizer includes any individual or entity that acts as competition manager, licensee, and includes any designee(s) with management authority over the competition and its operations.

Competition Staff – For purposes of this document, competition staff includes any individual who is employed or contracted by competition management. Competition staff includes, but is not limited to, ring crews, jump crews, stable crews, competition office staff, medical personnel, awards crew, in-gate personnel, paddock managers, announcers, licensed officials, scribes, etc.

- **Officials** - Any reference to officials, or licensed officials includes all types of competition officials (see GR113). For the purposes of this document, any individuals participating in an approved educational activity for a USEF or Recognized Affiliate licensing program (e.g. apprentices, training program participants, dressage applicants observing or sitting, clinicians, instructors, etc.) are also considered officials and must comply with all applicable requirements within the Action Plan.

Close Contact – For purposes of this document, close contact as [defined by the CDC](#) is someone who was within six (6) feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period* beginning two (2) days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, two (2) days prior to test specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated. It is important to note that close contact has occurred regardless of whether one, or both individuals is wearing a mask. (Refer to [CDC FAQ](#)).

**Individual exposures added together over a 24-hour period (e.g., three 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes).*

Anyone who has been in contact with an individual who is confirmed or suspected to be COVID-19-positive should quarantine in accordance with [CDC Guidelines](#).

COVID-19 Incident or Outbreak – For purposes of this document, an incident is defined as a report of any COVID-19 related event or occurrence including, but not limited to, an individual who is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19. An outbreak is defined as multiple COVID-19 related incidents or occurrences.



Definitions - continued

Exposure – For purposes of this document, exposure is considered close contact with a COVID-19-infected individual (exhibiting symptoms or confirmed by a positive test result) within a distance of six feet for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more and results in the need to quarantine. While the ideal quarantine time is still considered to be 14 days, it is recognized that a shorter quarantine period may balance significant societal burdens against the progressive smaller possibility of spreading the virus over time after exposure accordingly. An individual may discontinue quarantine:

- After Day 10 following close contact (exposure) without testing if no COVID-19 symptoms are present, or;
- After Day 7 if no COVID-19 symptoms are present and after receiving a negative COVID-19 test result (testing must occur on Day 5 or later after exposure)

After discontinuing quarantine, all individuals should:

- Monitor for symptoms for 14 days after exposure
- Immediately self-isolate if symptoms develop and contact a personal healthcare provider or public health authority
- Wear a face mask/face covering, maintain social distancing of at least six feet from others, and wash hands frequently

Face Masks – For purposes of this document, any reference to face masks includes cloth face coverings, N-95, KN-95 and surgical masks. Competition Organizers must provide facemasks or face coverings to competition staff, volunteers and officials. **Face masks and face coverings must fully cover the nose and the mouth while being worn.**

***The CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain. Cloth face coverings should fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face, be secured with ties or ear loops, include multiple layers of fabric, allow for breathing without restriction and be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape.

Isolation – Separation of a person or group of people known or reasonably believed to be infected with a communicable disease and potentially infectious, from those who are not infected to prevent the spread of the communicable disease.

Participants – For purposes of this document, any reference to Participants includes owners, lessees, riders, athletes, parents, vaulters, drivers, trainers, coaches, longeurs, navigators, personal care assistants (PCAs), and any other required support personnel/staff that are essential for providing care to the horses and/or the athletes.

PPE – Personal Protection Equipment.



Definitions - continued

Quarantine – Separation of a person or group of people, known or reasonably believed to have been exposed to a communicable disease but are not yet symptomatic, from others who have not yet been exposed, to prevent the possible spread of the communicable disease. ***Please refer to [Exposure definition above for quarantine guidance.](#)***

Social Distancing – Also called “physical distancing,” means keeping a minimum of 6 feet (about 2 arms’ length) space between yourself and other people outside your immediate household, as well as avoiding congregate settings or a concentration of individuals in a single area.

- **Immediate Household** – Individuals consistently living in the same house or dwelling. Members of a household may or may not be related. For purposes of this document, immediate household may also be referred to as same household or own household.
- For social distancing protocols specific to Vaulting athletes, refer to [Appendix C](#).

Public/Spectators – For purposes of this document, spectators refers to the general public, fans, or any individuals who are not directly involved in the competition by way of being a participant, a member of competition staff, a service provider (e.g. media or photographer), volunteer, or other support personnel (farrier, veterinarian, etc.).

Service Providers – For purposes of this document, service providers are those individuals or entities who provide direct services contracted by competition management. Service providers include but are not limited to vendors, caterers, feed suppliers, photographers, videographers, media, venue/facility staff, cleaning service providers (including portable restroom service), and waste disposal personnel.

Support Personnel - For purposes of this document, support personnel are those individuals employed or contracted by Participants to provide care or services to horses and/or participants. Support personnel includes, but is not limited to, veterinarians, farriers, equine therapists, grooms, and braiders, etc.

Symptoms – Symptoms of COVID-19 include, but are not limited to, subjective or measured fever, cough, and shortness of breath and/or difficulty breathing. Additional symptoms may include sore throat, muscle pain, headache, chills/shaking, or newly developed loss of taste or smell.

Temperature Monitoring – The daily (or alternatively defined period) non-contact body temperature testing utilizing technology that scans forehead temperature (temporal or infrared thermometer) to measure an individual’s body temperature to verify no fever is present. For purposes of this document, a fever is defined as an elevated body temperature of 100.4° F (38° C) or higher.

WHO – World Health Organization. All activity that occurs at a USEF-licensed competition must be conducted in accordance with WHO recommendations.



Mandatory Requirements for Competition Organizers

D. General

USEF-Licensed competitions must operate in accordance with the USEF COVID-19 Action Plan for USEF-Licensed Competitions (Plan). This plan is based on federal, state and local regulations, [WHO recommendations](#), [CDC guidelines](#) and USEF requirements. There will be times when regulations, recommendations, guidelines and requirements may differ. In these instances, the more restrictive regulations, recommendations, guidelines and requirements will prevail and supersede all others, e.g. face masks/coverings may not be required by a state or local government but is required at a USEF licensed competition nonetheless due to CDC guidance. Additional requirements and recommendations specifically applicable to Vaulting competitions can be found in [Appendix C](#).

Additionally, competition organizers must implement the USEF requirements listed on the following pages, and are very strongly encouraged to implement all recommended best practices contained herein or similar practices for mitigating risks related to the COVID-19 virus.

These requirements are in effect immediately and until further notice, however, they are subject to revisions as the COVID-19 virus environment changes.

USEF Competition Organizers must complete the [WHO Mass Gathering for Sports Risk Assessment Tool](#) and work with state and local governments and public health authorities prior to the start of the competition to help determine risks and mitigation measures. Competition Organizers are encouraged to consult their insurers and legal counsel as well.

If permission from a state or local government agency or public health authority is required in order for a competition to be allowed to operate, it is expected that competition organizers will have obtained verifiable permission from those entities prior to conducting the competition(s).

If competition organizers have any questions, please contact Katlynn Sacco by email at ksacco@usef.org or by phone at (859) 225-6981.



Mandatory Requirements for Competition Organizers – continued

E. Agreements

- **For currently licensed competitions:** Execute the Addendum to the USEF Licensing Agreement (provided by USEF) by the required deadline prior to the start of the competition.
- Ensure that all participants, including licensed officials and volunteers, provide emergency contact information and execute an updated state-specific [Waiver and Release of Liability, Assumption of Risk and Indemnity Agreement](#) required by USEF, as a condition of participation. Please ensure use of the updated form for competitions starting on May 6, 2020, or after. If a state-specific waiver is not available, please use the [general version](#) of the form.
- Prior to the start of a competition, create an [Emergency Response Plan](#) specific to a COVID-19 incident or outbreak that includes local medical resources and addresses outbreak protocols including medical evaluation, isolation and quarantine, and reporting.
 - If a COVID-19 incident or outbreak occurs, USEF and local public health authorities
 - Provide training for competition staff, volunteers and licensed officials regarding all procedures and requirements associated with the Plan.
 - Ensure vendors and service providers are included in the communication and training requirements associated with the Plan.
 - Disseminate a copy of the Plan to all applicable competition personnel
- A minimum of 14 days prior to the start of the competition, inform (e.g., via prize list/omnibus, website, social media, email, etc.) all participants, officials and competition personnel of protocols and safeguards implemented for their protection against spreading COVID-19 by providing them with a list of such measures.

F. Access

- Require and provide for onsite temperature monitoring for volunteers, officials, [competition staff](#) and [service providers](#) once daily prior to entering the competition grounds. Anyone with a temperature of 100.4° F (38° C) or higher may not enter the facility.
- The following individuals are not allowed to enter the competition grounds:
 - Anyone who exhibits [COVID-19 symptoms](#),
 - Anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19 within last 10 days,
 - Anyone who has tested positive outside of the past 10 days, but is still symptomatic, or
 - *Anyone who has been [exposed to or has been](#) in [close contact](#) with someone who has **COVID-19 symptoms or has** tested positive for COVID-19 within **either** the last ~~14~~ **7 or 10 days (dependent upon certain criteria - refer to [CDC Quarantine Options](#))**.

**Exception: Healthcare personnel who have treated patients using appropriate medical-grade PPE during the course of performing professional duties are exempted from this restriction.*



Mandatory Requirements for Competition Organizers - continued

- Refer to Appendix A for Self-Isolation/Self-Quarantine Directives in the event a person has a fever or exhibits other symptoms of COVID-19.
- **Please reference [Participant requirements](#) regarding temperature monitoring for Participant responsibilities.
- ****Questions regarding access to competition grounds and eligibility to participate in competition that may not be clearly identified under the points above must be directed to ksacco@usef.org or dsaliling@usef.org who will consult with USEF medical experts and provide a written decision from the USEF with regard to the participant's eligibility.*
- Competition Organizers must notify USEF and local public health authorities, if any individual who was present on the competition grounds tests positive for COVID-19 within 14 days of the conclusion of the competition. Direct USEF reports to ksacco@usef.org.
 - Competition Organizers will direct the reporting individual to contact the local public health authorities (and provide the contact information) for the purposes of having the local public health authorities perform contact tracing.
 - Competition Organizers are to remind all [competition staff](#), [service providers](#), [participants](#), and [support personnel](#) of their responsibility to report if they test positive for COVID-19 within 14 days of the conclusion of competition (refer to [Section L](#)).
- Require a face mask or face covering for all staff, officials, volunteers, service providers and participants at all times while on competition grounds when not mounted on a horse, riding in a horse-drawn carriage or cart, vaulting as an Individual, Pas De Deux (PDD) or Squad member (refer to Appendix C), or during in-hand classes as outlined by the procedures* below. Competition Organizers must provide face masks or face coverings to competition staff, volunteers and officials. You can find recommendations for proper use of face masks and face coverings via the [Centers for Disease Control & Prevention website](#).
 - *To eat or drink, an individual must move far enough away from others to minimize the possibility of being within six feet of any other individual before the lowering the mask or face covering to eat or drink. The mask must be immediately replaced over the nose and mouth when finished.*
 - *If an individual requires modification to this face mask/face covering requirement, please submit written request, accompanied by documentation substantiating the need for modification, to sgilbert@usef.org. It should be noted that we are experiencing a high volume of legal inquiries at this time, and we will respond as quickly as possible. Requests for modifications will be reviewed on a confidential basis with a medical consultant.*



Mandatory Requirements for Competition Organizers – continued

**In-Hand Class Procedures - face masks or face coverings that fully cover your nose and mouth are required at all times at USEF-licensed competitions, including while exhibiting horses and ponies in-hand. However, if absolutely necessary, you may lower your mask while jogging or running with a horse or pony in-hand, or while executing a pattern, but only if you are able to maintain social distancing of at least six feet while doing so. The mask must be replaced immediately once the jog, or run, or pattern, is completed.*

***A participant cannot be disqualified or penalized for wearing a facemask or face covering while competing.*

G. Signage

- **Post signage that displays all applicable federal, state and local regulations, requirements and orders as well as [WHO recommendations](#) and [CDC guidelines](#) as they relate to mass gatherings and sporting events in effect at the competition.**
- Post signage throughout the competition grounds that lists the requirements for social distancing and the use of face masks/face coverings.
 - *USEF-provided posters: [Face Masks & Social Distancing](#)*
- Post signage at all entrances to the competition grounds which identifies the symptoms of COVID-19 and states the following:
 - To protect others from possible transmission of the virus, anyone who exhibits [COVID-19 symptoms](#), **has been exposed to or has been** in [close contact](#) with someone who has **COVID-19 symptoms, or anyone who has** tested positive for COVID-19 within **either** the last ~~14~~ **7 or 10** days (**dependent upon certain criteria - refer to [CDC Quarantine Options](#)**) **cannot enter the competition grounds.**
Exception: healthcare personnel who have treated patients using appropriate medical-grade PPE during the course of performing professional duties. These individuals are encouraged to contact their health care provider immediately for further medical advice and must obtain documented clearance from their health care provider before entering the competition grounds. Participants must assume responsibility for themselves and their own staff (e.g. grooms, assistants, etc.).
- *Sample poster: [Symptoms of Coronavirus Disease](#)*
- Post signage throughout the competition grounds (i.e. competition office, competition and schooling areas, barns, etc.) which includes recommendations about good hygiene along with informing participants and others about ways to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission.
 - *Sample Poster: [CDC – Stop the Spread of Germs](#)*



Mandatory Requirements for Competition Organizers - continued

H. Social Distancing & Limiting Entries and/or Stabling

Enforce social distancing requirements throughout the competition grounds at all times.

- All individuals must practice social distancing (or physical distancing) at all times while on the competition grounds by staying at least 6 feet (about 2 arms' length) from any person who is not a member of their [immediate household](#). Members of the same household are still required to wear masks or face coverings at all times while on competition grounds.

**Exceptions*

- *Social distancing is not required when competing in driving classes where more than one participant is riding in the horse-drawn carriage or cart.*
- *Individuals are allowed to be seated together while being transported by golf cart (or similar four-wheeled transport vehicle), but capacity may not exceed the number of seats on the cart or vehicle and **all individuals must wear face masks or face coverings**.*
- *Congregating on or around a parked or stationary golf cart or vehicle is prohibited, unless the individuals are all visually identifiable (e.g. credentialed) as immediate household members, are all wearing face masks/face coverings, and do not exceed the seating capacity of the cart or vehicle.*
- Modifications to social distancing requirements specific to Vaulting competitions are referenced in Appendix C.
- Competition Organizers are encouraged to implement a system that visually (e.g., numbered or colored IDs or some other form of credential) identifies members of the same household. For Vaulting competition requirements, refer to [Appendix C](#).
- Prohibit the public, spectators, and non-essential personnel such as guests from being on the competition grounds until further notice.
 - Competition Organizers must determine whether a sponsor can be present on competition grounds by assessing whether the sponsor meets the criteria of being essential to providing care to the horses or athletes, or provides direct services contracted by the Competition Organizer. If sponsors are present, they must comply with face mask/face covering, social distancing, and all other requirements.
- Organize horse arrivals and departures to limit contact between people
- Arrange judges' and other officials' areas to comply with social distancing requirements. In the event that it is absolutely impossible to maintain social distancing of six (6) feet or more, a solid, non-porous, securely attached divider must be placed in the location where social distancing cannot be maintained (i.e., between, in front of and/or behind seating areas). The divider provides a physical separation and barrier between individuals and therefore must be of sufficient size to effectively and significantly reduce the risk of respiratory particulates being spread. **The inclusion of such dividers does not eliminate the requirement to wear face masks or face coverings.** For additional specifics regarding dividers, please reference the [Competition Organizer COVID-19 Action Plan FAQs](#).



Mandatory Requirements for Competition Organizers – continued

- Restrict competition office access to essential personnel only, configure the space and limit the number of office staff to comply with social distancing, and limit the number of participants who can enter the competition office at one time (e.g., schedule check-in/check-out times)
- Competition Organizers must notify USEF if entries are to be limited.
 - The FEI will determine whether entries may be limited in FEI classes.
 - Competition Organizers may limit entries to the competition and/or to specific sections/classes within the competition to manage the concentration of horses and people.
 - Regardless of the scope of the limitation, the limiting of entries must be done on a first come, first served basis and relevant information must be posted on the competition website or in the prize list, as well as at the competition office and at each competition area (i.e. ring, arena, field, cross country course).
 - Competition management must also communicate the system used for notifying and “wait-listing” individuals who submit entries after the available spaces are filled, and the method must be equally applied to all potential participants
- Configure stabling to comply with social distancing requirements in order to manage concentration of horses and people.
- Competition Organizers must notify USEF if stabling is to be limited.
 - Regardless of the scope of the limitation, the limiting of stabling must be done on a first come, first served basis and relevant information must be posted on the competition website or in the prize list.
 - Competition Organizer must also communicate the system used for notifying and “wait-listing” individuals who submit stabling requests after the available spaces are filled, and the method must be equally applied to all potential participants.
- Competition Organizers must publish their policy regarding entry and stall refunds within the prize list and/or on the competition website.

I. Enforcement Authority

USEF Stewards and Technical Delegates will inform individuals when they are not in compliance with the regulations and requirements in effect at the competition and shall report such situations to the Competition Organizer. The Competition Organizer has the authority under GR 702.1 and GR914 to remove from the facility any person who does not comply with the regulations and requirements in effect at the competition. Stewards/Technical Delegates must report the removal of any person from competition grounds for non-compliance with regulations and requirements in effect at the competition in their USEF Steward/Technical Delegate Report.

- Competition Organizers are responsible for enforcing all social distancing and face mask/face covering requirements.



Mandatory Requirements for Competition Organizers – continued

- Stewards/TDs are required to report compliance on the part of Competition Organizers with respect to the mandatory requirements listed above.
 - Did the Competition Organizer confirm completion of the [WHO Mass Gathering for Sports Risk Assessment Tool](#)?
 - Did Competition Organizer adhere to the requirements listed above in Sections D-H to the best of its abilities, including posting the required signage?



Mandatory Requirements for Participants

J. General

USEF-Licensed competitions must operate in accordance with the USEF COVID-19 Action Plan for USEF-Licensed Competitions (Plan). This plan is based on federal, state and local regulations, [WHO recommendations](#), [CDC guidelines](#) and USEF requirements. There will be times when regulations, recommendations, guidelines and requirements may differ. In these instances, the more restrictive regulations, recommendations, guidelines and requirements will prevail and supersede all others, e.g. face masks/coverings may not be required by a state or local government but is required at a USEF licensed competition nonetheless due to CDC guidance. Additional requirements and recommendations specifically applicable to Vaulting competitions can be found in [Appendix C](#).

It is important to note that local public health authorities may impose more restrictive actions and protocols than those listed within this document. The USEF will continue to evaluate new information provided and will update this Action Plan accordingly.

[Participants](#) are required to comply with these and any additional Competition Organizer **or local health authority** requirements at all times while present on competition grounds. Failure to do so may result in expulsion from the grounds.

These requirements are in effect immediately and until further notice, however, they are subject to revisions as the COVID-19 virus environment changes.

If participants have any questions, please contact Debbie Saliling by email at dsaliling@usef.org or by phone at (859) 225-6930.

K. Waiver/Release & Indemnity Agreement

Provide emergency contact information and execute an updated state-specific [Waiver and Release of Liability, Assumption of Risk and Indemnity Agreement](#) required by USEF, as a condition of participation. If a state-specific waiver is not available, please use the [general version](#) of the form.

Please ensure use of the updated form provided by competition organizer.



Mandatory Requirements for Competition Participants – continued

L. Access

- [Participants](#) and [Support Personnel](#) are required to self-monitor their temperature once daily prior to entering the competition grounds. Anyone with a temperature of 100.4° F (38° C) or higher may not enter the facility.
- The following individuals are not allowed to enter the competition grounds:
 - Anyone who exhibits [COVID-19 symptoms](#),
 - Anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19 within last 10 days,
 - Anyone who has tested positive outside of the past 10 days, but is still symptomatic, or
 - *Anyone who has been ***exposed to or has been*** in [close contact](#) with someone who has ***COVID-19 symptoms or has*** tested positive for COVID-19 within ***either*** the last ***14 7 or 10*** days (***dependent upon certain criteria - refer to [CDC Quarantine Options](#)***).

**Exception: Healthcare personnel who have treated patients using appropriate medical-grade PPE during the course of performing professional duties are exempted from this restriction.*

 - Refer to Appendix A for CDC guidelines for self-isolation/quarantine directives in the event a person has a fever or exhibits other symptoms of COVID-19.
- Participants and Support Personnel are required to wear a facemask or face covering at all times while on competition grounds when not mounted on a horse, riding in a horse-drawn carriage or cart, vaulting as an Individual, Pas De Deux (PDD) or Squad member (refer to [Appendix C](#)), or during in-hand classes as outlined by the *procedures below. You can find recommendations for proper use of face masks and face coverings via the [Centers for Disease Control & Prevention website](#).
 - *To eat or drink, an individual must move far enough away from others to minimize the possibility of being within six feet of any other individual before the lowering the mask or face covering to eat or drink. The mask must be immediately replaced over the nose and mouth when finished.*
 - *If an individual requires modification to this face mask/face covering requirement, please submit written request, accompanied by documentation substantiating the need for modification, to sgilbert@usef.org. It should be noted that we are experiencing a high volume of legal inquiries at this time, and we will respond as quickly as possible. Requests for modifications will be reviewed on a confidential basis with a medical consultant.*

**In-Hand Class Procedures - face masks or face coverings that fully cover your nose and mouth are required at all times at USEF-licensed competitions, including while exhibiting horses and ponies in-hand. However, if absolutely necessary, you may lower your mask while jogging or running with a horse or pony in-hand, or while executing a pattern, but only if you are able to maintain social distancing of at least six feet while doing so. The mask must be replaced immediately once the jog, or run, or pattern, is completed.*

***A participant may choose to wear a facemask or face covering when mounted on a horse and cannot be disqualified or penalized for doing so while competing.*



Mandatory Requirements for Competition Participants – continued

- If any person who was present on the competition grounds tests positive for COVID-19 within 14 days of the conclusion of competition, USEF, the Competition Organizer, and local public health authorities must be notified immediately. Direct USEF reports to ksacco@usef.org. Competition Organizers will provide the reporting individual with contact information for the local public health authorities who will perform the contact tracing process.

****Questions regarding access to competition grounds and eligibility to participate in competition that may not be clearly identified under the points above or under [Point F on page 9](#) must be directed to ksacco@usef.org or dsaliling@usef.org, who will consult with USEF medical experts and provide a written decision from the USEF with regard to the participant's eligibility.*

M. Social Distancing/Participation Protocols

- All individuals must practice social distancing (or physical distancing) at all times while on the competition grounds by staying at least 6 feet (about 2 arms' length) from any person who is not a member of their [immediate household](#), or their Vaulting social bubble (refer to [Appendix C](#)). Members of the same household are still required to wear masks or face coverings at all times while on competition grounds. *Exceptions:
 - *Social distancing is not required while competing (including warm-up) in driving classes where more than one participant is riding in the horse-drawn carriage or cart.*
 - *Individuals are allowed to be seated together while being transported by golf cart (or similar four-wheeled transport vehicle), but capacity may not exceed the number of seats on the cart or vehicle and all individuals must wear face masks or face coverings.*
 - *Congregating on or around a parked or stationary golf cart or vehicle is prohibited, unless the individuals are all visually identifiable (e.g. credentialed) as immediate household members, are all wearing face masks/face coverings, and do not exceed the seating capacity of the cart or vehicle.*
 - Modifications to social distancing and face mask/face covering requirements specific to Vaulting competitions are referenced in [Appendix C](#).
- Wash hands often and adhere to other sanitization practices throughout the day.



Recommended Best Practices for Competition Organizers

The following Recommended Best Practices have been provided to assist Competition Organizers with determining risks and developing measures to mitigate those risks. Please note these are not mandatory, however USEF strongly encourages their implementation.

N. General Considerations

- To the extent possible, limit the number of entrances and exits to the venue to manage crowding, social distancing and venue limitations.
- It is strongly recommended that competition organizers secure additional staff or volunteers dedicated to monitoring adherence to Action Plan requirements, and who can support USEF Stewards', Technical Delegates' and Competition Management's efforts to ensure compliance with safety protocols.
- Communication – Use radio, phone and online communication methods as much as possible and communicate important information frequently throughout the competition grounds.
- It is strongly recommended that competition organizers conduct exhibitor meetings (virtually, telephonically, or in an environment where social distancing can be maintained) both prior to and during the competition to communicate requirements and address questions.
- VIP and other social areas are strongly discouraged unless social distancing requirements are enforced in accordance with all applicable federal, state and local regulations, requirements and orders as well as [WHO recommendations](#) and [CDC guidelines](#) as they relate to mass gatherings and sporting events.
- It is strongly recommended that if people are going to travel together in the same vehicle to a competition, they should take their temperature prior to getting into the vehicle to ensure no one travels to the competition with an elevated temperature.

O. Considerations for Facilities, Staff, Medical Personnel, Service Providers & Volunteers

- [Service providers](#) and [support personnel](#) are recommended to comply with the following:
 - Register with the competition organizer and indicate when they are going to be on the competition grounds;
 - Sign a [waiver](#) provided by the organizer;
 - Comply with any competition organizer requirements to change PPE (face mask/face coverings, etc.) when moving between stables; and
 - Do not linger or socialize in stables or anywhere else on competition grounds while performing or after completing work.
- Cleaning/Sanitizing Locations
 - Provide hand sanitization stations with access to soap and water or alcohol based hand sanitizer at each competition area and schooling/warm up area.



Recommended Best Practices for Competition Organizers - continued

- Provide hand sanitizer to all officials, ring crew, office staff and maintenance staff.
- Frequently sanitize surfaces touched by many: door handles, arena gates, wash racks and hoses, etc.
- Ensure frequent cleaning and sanitizing of bathrooms, provide soap and water or alcohol based hand sanitizer in bathrooms.
- Prohibit the use of public water fountains.
- **Competition Office**
 - Strongly encourage all competitors to complete entry forms, in their entirety, including having all requisite memberships in place, prior to entering competition office.
 - Strongly encourage that all entries, adds, scratches, feed & bedding orders, billing/invoicing are done electronically.
 - Install clear plastic, glass or other type of protective shield/barrier in front of office staff.
 - Provide hand sanitizer near the door.
 - Provide an 'in' door and an 'out' door, if possible.
 - Provide markers to delineate 6 feet spacing between people in the office and in any waiting lines (e.g., markers on floor).
 - Prepare and email competitor bills as early as possible.
 - Establish appointment times for checkout at the competition office.
- **Service Providers and Vendors**
 - Advise any service providers (e.g. vendors, food-service, farrier, feed suppliers, waste disposal personnel) to take precautions in accordance with federal, state, local and facility regulations and CDC guidelines.
 - For onsite food-service, consider requesting provision of pre-packaged food only.

P. Competition, Schooling and Exercise Area Considerations

- Utilize posted orders of go and/or published ride times including online orders of go and ride times.
 - At venues with multiple competition areas, consider designating one area as primary where assigned times and/or orders of go take precedence.
- Consider scheduling course walks as necessary to comply with social distancing requirements (e.g., schedule small groups in separate sections).
- Utilize individual water bottles versus community water coolers.
- Limit and organize seating areas to comply with social distancing requirements.
- Restrict the number of people accompanying a horse to the competition area to those persons who are needed for safety or for achieving effective competition, but they all must comply with social distancing requirements.
- Schooling and exercise area provisions:
 - Provide monitors to ensure compliance with requirements and best practices.



Recommended Best Practices for Competition Organizers - continued

- Schooling areas - Provide sanitizing items (spray bottles, wipes) at each competition arena and schooling/warm-up area and advise individuals to wipe down jumps or other equipment after use. For recommendations specific to Vaulting competition warm-up areas, please refer to [Appendix C](#).
 - Determine equine/human capacity in relation to the area and restrict access to a limited number in order to maintain social distancing requirements.
- In classes where participants compete collectively, the Competition Organizer must determine and communicate to participants, the maximum number of horses permitted in each competition area at one time based on the size of the competition areas and social distancing requirements.
 - Communicate with participants if classes will be divided and held as separate classes, or split and held in or more than one section. For example:
 - Classes may be divided into separate classes with each class receiving separate awards.
 - Classes may be split into sections with the final section being comprised of the best entrants from each of the previous split sections with one set of awards given in the final section.
- Consider utilizing technology for information transfer to mitigate the risk of virus spread by the manual transfer of paper (i.e. judge's cards, scoresheets, etc.).
- Create a method of giving ribbons and trophies that reduces or eliminates hand-to-hand contact.

Q. Stabling Considerations

- Restrict access to the stabling areas to veterinarians, athletes, officials, grooms, trainers and other essential personnel.
- Remind all personnel in the stabling areas to comply with all best practices and guidelines in effect at the competition.
- Provide hand sanitization stations in the stabling area and encourage stable personnel to use frequently.



Recommended Best Practices for Participants

Although not mandatory, Participants and Support Personnel are strongly encouraged to follow the Recommended Best Practices listed below at all times while present on the competition grounds.

R. Access & Monitoring Considerations

- Provide non-contact thermometers (e.g., temporal or infrared) to staff and require temperature monitoring throughout the day.
- Limit access to stabling area and competition grounds to essential personnel only; discourage multiple family members from accompanying owners and riders.
 - Consider having riders meet their horses at the competition or schooling areas or other pre-designated area to further limit contact in the stabling area.
 - Consider the use of mounting blocks to avoid one-on-one contact between riders and grooms/assistants.
- Provide adequate food and beverage supplies for your barn and your support staff for the duration of the competition to avoid unnecessary community exposure.
- It is strongly recommended that if people are going to travel together in the same vehicle to a competition, they should take their temperature prior to getting into the vehicle to ensure no one travels to the competition with an elevated temperature.

S. Cleaning & Sanitizing Considerations

- Provide hand sanitizer, masks, and other PPE deemed necessary to your barn staff and other personnel and encourage them to use these items on a regular basis.
- Do not mix equipment (tack, grooming supplies, lead shanks, etc.) and sanitize between each use.
- Regularly sanitize bikes/motorbikes/golf carts/car & truck door handles, stable doors, bucket handles, light switches, etc., and equipment including tack, grooming, feeding, stall cleaning materials, etc.

T. Scheduling Considerations

- Schedule competition days (ride times, schooling times, etc.) as efficiently as possible to minimize time spent on the competition grounds each day.



Additional Resources

U. Resources & Reference Tools –

[USEF Coronavirus Disease Resources and Updates](#)

CDC (Centers for Disease Control)

[Symptoms of Coronavirus and treatment resources](#)

[Resources for Large Community Events and Mass Gatherings](#)

- [Q&A on Event Planning and COVID-19](#)
- [Guidance for Organizers - Mass Gatherings and Event Preparation](#)

Print Resources

- Poster – [Symptoms of Coronavirus Disease](#)
 - [Spanish Version](#)
- Poster/Fact Sheet - [What you should know about COVID-19 to protect yourself and others](#)
 - [Spanish Version](#)
- Poster – [Stop the Spread of Germs](#)
 - [Spanish Version](#)
- Poster – [STOP: Stay at home when you are sick!](#)
 - [Spanish Version](#)
- Poster/Fact Sheet – [Share Facts About COVID-19](#)
 - [Spanish Version](#)

Audio/Video Resources

- [Public Service Announcement Samples](#) for use by Organizers
- [Reference Videos](#)

Husch Blackwell

[State-by-State COVID-19 Resources](#)

USOPC (United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee)

[USOPC Sports Event Planning Considerations post-COVID-19](#)

[USOPC Return to Training Considerations post-COVID-19](#)

WHO (World Health Organization)

******[WHO Mass Gathering for Sports Risk Assessment Tool](#)

- [Risk Assessment Decision Tree](#)

****** *Required for use by competition organizers*

[Technical Guidance: Points of Entry and Mass Gatherings](#)

- [Q&A on Mass Gatherings and COVID-19](#)
- [Key Planning Recommendations for Mass Gatherings](#)
- [Considerations for Sports Federations/Sport Event Organizers when planning mass gatherings](#)

APPENDIX A

Self-Isolation/Self-Quarantine Directives

| If you... | Steps to take... |
|---|--|
| If you or someone in your home might have been exposed | Self-Monitor Be alert for symptoms. Watch for fever, cough, or shortness of breath. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take your temperature if symptoms develop. Practice social distancing. Maintain 6 feet of distance from others, and stay out of crowded places. Follow CDC guidance if symptoms develop. |
| If you... | Steps to take... |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recently had exposure to or close contact with a person with COVID-19, or Recently traveled from somewhere outside the U.S. or on a cruise ship or river boat | Self-Quarantine <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check your temperature twice daily and watch for symptoms. Stay home for 14 days and self-monitor. <i>In certain instances, quarantine can end prior to the 14 days. Refer to CDC guidance.</i> If possible, stay away from people who are high-risk for getting very sick from COVID-19. |
| If you... | Steps to take... |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have been diagnosed with COVID-19, or Are waiting for test results, or Have symptoms such as cough, fever, or shortness of breath | Self-Isolate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay in a specific “sick room” or area and away from other people and animals. If possible, use a separate bathroom. Read important information about caring for yourself or someone else who is sick. |



APPENDIX B

SAMPLE

Competition Organizer Holding Statement – COVID-19 Positive

We were notified on **[INSERT DATE]** that an **[exhibitor / staff member / official / participant – DO NOT INCLUDE NAME UNLESS USE IS APPROVED BY INDIVIDUAL]** tested positive for COVID-19 after attending **[INSERT COMPETITION NAME]**. Per the requirements of the USEF COVID-19 Action Plan, we are notifying all individuals who were in attendance at the competition.

Our staff continues to work diligently to ensure the competition venue is properly sanitized and all protocols of the USEF COVID-19 Action Plan are followed. We ask that individuals on-site remain committed to wearing face masks or face coverings, adhere to social distancing guidelines, and practice frequent hand washing and hand sanitization to mitigate risk while on-site. For additional information, please contact **[INSERT COMPETITION CONTACT]** at **[INSERT EMAIL]**.



APPENDIX C

Requirements and Recommendations for Operating USEF-Licensed Vaulting Competitions

C.1. General

Unless otherwise noted, all requirements and recommendations listed in the [USEF Action Plan for Licensed Competitions](#) apply to USEF-Licensed Vaulting Competitions. This appendix document contains additional requirements and recommendations that are specific to USEF Vaulting and apply to both the training and the competition environment.

In Vaulting, Squad and Pas-de-Deux (PDD) events are both considered a close contact sport, and training and competing will require intermittent high levels of physical contact. Competing and training of Squad and PDD entails an impossibility to maintain social distancing measures at certain times. As a result, it is imperative that members of a Squad or PDD establish themselves into a [Vaulting Social Bubble](#) by adhering to the pre-competition training requirements and recommendations outlined below, and that they maintain their Vaulting Social Bubble throughout training and competition.

Every person involved in Vaulting Events has the responsibility to mitigate the risk of virus spread. Hand and respiratory hygiene, wearing masks, and social distancing have proved to be the most effective measures to prevent virus transmission. In the Vaulting training and competition environment, athletes will need to be especially careful to avoid exposure and spread, even while not training or competing.

If an athlete or Team member/staff becomes infected, each of the other Team athletes and Team staff members would be considered close contacts and would require testing and quarantine. Close contact training should be planned after consultation with local public health authorities. (Refer to Section [C.3. – Pre-Competition Requirements](#) below).

*****Attention FEI Vaulting Competition Organizers: Click [here](#) to access the Discipline-Specific Guidelines for FEI Vaulting Competitions taking place during the COVID-19 Pandemic, published August 27, 2020.***

FEI/USEF Position on Squad Competitions

***During COVID time, and at least until end of 2020, Competition Organizers/OC are not obliged to organize Squad competitions and the FEI and USEF recommend not hosting Squad competitions at any level and in any category. This recommendation overrules any requirements on Squad competitions at CVIs.**

(*References to FEI Board's emergency situation provisions can be found published on the FEI Website).



C.2. Pre-Competition Training Requirements - Vaulting

The training requirements listed below are applicable in a home training environment and must be observed for a minimum of 14 days prior to any competition.

In order to be eligible to compete at USEF Vaulting competitions, all athletes, longeurs, coaches, and staff must comply with and successfully adhere to the group training session and pre-competition training requirements outlined below.

Individual, PDD, and Squad athletes associated with the same club/group/team unit, along with related longeurs, coaches and staff, are required to establish a Vaulting Social Bubble by following the mandatory group training session protocols outlined below in a home training environment for a minimum of 14 days prior to each competition.

A [Vaulting Social Bubble](#) is established when members of the same club/group/team have contact within their own PDD and Squad for a minimum of 14 days prior to start date for each competition, but have no contact with any opposition and have signed a [Waiver of Release of Liability, Assumption of Risk and Indemnity Agreement](#) specific to the state in which the competition is being held (if a state-specific waiver is not available, please complete the [general waiver](#) form). PDD and Squads must register with the Competition Organizer as a PDD or Squad prior to the start of a competition. Vaulters competing as an Individual, PDD and Squad are required to follow social distancing requirements when outside their vaulting social bubble.

Criteria for Participation in Group Training Sessions

Every athlete, longeur, coach and staff member who trains as a group must comply with the required criteria listed below for a minimum of 14 consecutive days without any symptom onset or illness outbreak before that group can be deemed to have established a vaulting social bubble:

- No signs or symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days
 - If the person has had a case of documented COVID-19 infection, the person is required to obtain a note from a medical doctor indicating they are cleared to participate in group training.
- No [close contact](#) with anyone who is sick within 14 days of beginning group training
 - Since the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 can be fairly non-specific and not just respiratory symptoms, it is recommended that athletes should not be in close sustained contact with anyone who is sick for 14 days prior to beginning group training. This requirement reduces the risk of introducing COVID-19 into the training group by someone who may have COVID-19 but isn't experiencing any symptoms



Pre-Competition Training Requirements – Vaulting (continued)

- All participants must self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 twice daily in accordance with the Self-Monitoring instructions outlined below. If any signs of symptoms or infection are present, the participant should not attend the practice, should notify coaches and staff, and should contact their healthcare provider
- Upon arrival to train, coaches or staff must ask each athlete if they are experiencing any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 and take their temperature. If the athlete has any signs or symptoms of COVID-19, they must be sent home and instructed to contact their healthcare provider
- Continue standard infection prevention measures (e.g., frequent handwashing, avoid touching your face, cover your mouth when coughing, etc.)
- Make sure appropriate infection prevention supplies are present in multiple targeted areas (e.g., hand sanitizer, facial tissues, facial coverings, etc.)
- Maintain the same group for all training sessions held in a 14-day period prior to any competition (i.e., do not allow group members to train outside their immediate group or co-mingle with other groups).
- Participants may use each other's equipment, but equipment must be cleaned between use
- Continue to use own water bottle, towel, personal hygiene products (e.g., soap, deodorant, etc.)
- Rigorous, frequent cleaning schedule/protocol of equipment with disinfectant before, during, and after training*, including wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) (e.g., gloves, face mask, etc.) to prevent contact with contaminated surfaces and protect against toxicities associated with cleaning products
- Athletes must arrive to group training sessions in practice uniform
- Athletes must avoid congregating in the barn or other common areas
- All participants must adhere to all face mask/face covering and social distancing requirements when in public outside the training environment

**Cleaning of training facilities should follow the [CDC recommendations for cleaning and disinfecting community facilities](#). Frequently touched areas (e.g., door handles, light switches) should be cleaned multiple times daily. Work-out equipment should be cleaned with anti-septic cleansers prior to use, between use by different athletes, and after use.*



Pre-Competition Training Requirements – Vaulting (continued)

SELF-MONITORING INSTRUCTIONS

Twice daily, check for the following signs or symptoms of respiratory infection:

- Temperature of 100.4° F (38° C) or higher
- Cough and/or shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

Other symptoms to pay attention to include:

- Sore Throat, Congestion, Headache
- Muscle and Joint Pain
- New Loss of Taste or Sense of Smell
- Chills
- Nausea, Vomiting, or Diarrhea

If you develop any of these symptoms, please contact your healthcare provider to discuss how to proceed.

In order to be eligible to compete, all vaulting athletes, longeurs, coaches and staff must complete a [Waiver and Release of Liability, Assumption of Risk and Indemnity Agreement](#) for the state in which the competition is held. (If a state-specific waiver is not available, please complete the [general waiver form](#)).

C.3. – Vaulting-Social Bubble Definition

For purposes of this document, a vaulting social bubble refers to members of the same squad or PDD who, by virtue of isolating themselves and adhering to the Pre-Competition Training Requirements listed below, have established themselves as an [immediate household](#) unit and are therefore exempt from social distancing requirements while training and competing (except in the case of PDD or squad members who must maintain a minimum distance of six feet from one another when entering the competition arena and lining up prior to the start of their performance; see [COVID-19 Rule Modification to VA110](#)). Vaulters competing as Individuals, may also be competing as a PDD, or Squad member and would be considered part of a vaulting social bubble.

Members of the same vaulting social bubble are still required to wear masks or face coverings at all times while on competition grounds when not practicing, warming-up, or competing.



Additional Mandatory Requirements for Vaulting Competition Organizers and Participants

Unless otherwise noted, all requirements listed in the [USEF Action Plan for Licensed Competitions](#) apply to USEF-Licensed Vaulting Competitions. Additional requirements specific to Vaulting competitions are listed below.

C. 4. Social Distancing & Face Mask/Covering Requirements for Vaulting Athletes

- Vaulting Individuals, Pas de Deux (PDD) and Squad members, who have established a [Vaulting Social Bubble](#) are exempt from social distancing requirements while training and competing (except in the case of PDD or squad members who must maintain a minimum distance of six feet from one another when entering the competition arena and lining up prior to the start of their performance; see [COVID-19 Rule Modification to VA110](#)).
- All Vaulting Individuals, PDD and Squad members, regardless of whether or not they are members of the same vaulting social bubble, are required to wear a face mask or face covering at all times while on competition grounds when not actually practicing, warming up, or competing.
- Individuals, PDD and Squad members are required to maintain their Vaulting Social Bubble throughout the competition and they must adhere to social distancing and face mask/face covering requirements anytime they are outside of their Vaulting Social Bubble.
- Vaulting Longeurs are required to wear a face mask/face covering at all times while on competition grounds, including practice, warm-up, and performance.

C.5. Credentialing Requirements

- Vaulting Individuals, PDD and Squads must register with the Competition Organizer as a Vaulting Social Bubble prior to the start of competition.
- Each vaulting social bubble must be visually distinguishable through the use of uniquely colored arm bands.
 - Vaulters competing as an Individual or PDD who are also a member of a Squad may share the same identification distinguishing the Vaulting Social Bubble.



Additional Mandatory Requirements for Vaulting Competitions - continued

C.6. Facilities & Arenas

- **Cleaning/Sanitizing Locations**
 - Competition organizer must provide hand sanitization stations with access to soap and water or alcohol based hand sanitizer at each Vaulting competition and practice/warm-up arena.
- **Warm-Up Arena**
 - Use of hand sanitizing product is required when entering and leaving Vaulting Warm-Up Arenas. Each individual will be asked by a volunteer to clean their hands at each entry and exit.
 - If athletes use specific devices to warm-up, the Competition Organizer must provide clear instructions on the necessary process to clean the devices after each use, and the required cleaning products should be available.
 - Whenever sharing material, unless used only by a same Squad or same PDD, the equipment must be cleaned and disinfected before and after each use. The use of shared mats in the warm-up is not permitted.
 - The Competition Organizer must set-up the warm-up area so that the crowd is evenly distributed over the entire surface of the warm-up zone.
 - All chairs, and all other equipment or materials that have been in contact with people must be cleaned with sanitary solution several times throughout the day and the end of each day. A clear cleaning procedure must be established by the Competition Organizer.
 - When leaving the warm-up area, Vaulters and longeurs must enter the competition arena through a dedicated one-way pathway.
- **Competition Arena**
 - An additional sanitary station must be placed at the entrance to the competition arena, and athletes are required to clean their hands before entering and before taking the whip of the longeur, if requested. Longeurs are required to clean their hands if they do not wear gloves.
 - When leaving the competition arena, Vaulters and longeurs must directly exit the arena through a dedicated one-way pathway.
 - Vaulting Judges, scribes and other officials must maintain social distancing and wear face masks/face coverings at all times while on competition grounds, including when officiating.
 - All chairs, and all other equipment or materials that have been in contact with people must be cleaned with sanitary solution between each squad or section performance and at the end of each day. A clear cleaning procedure must be established by the Competition Organizer.



Additional Mandatory Requirements for Vaulting Competitions - continued

Ground Jury/Officials Area

- Arrange judges' and other officials' areas to comply with social distancing requirements. In the event that it is absolutely impossible to maintain social distancing of six (6) feet or more, the erection of a solid, non-porous, securely attached divider must be placed in the location where social distancing cannot be maintained (i.e., between, in front of and/or behind seating areas). The divider provides a physical separation and barrier between individuals and therefore must be of sufficient size to effectively and significantly reduce the risk of respiratory particulates being spread. **The inclusion of such dividers does not eliminate the requirement to wear face masks or face coverings.**

Falls and Injuries

- Medical service providers must always wear face masks and gloves when tending to injured athletes or other personnel.
- Anyone else providing assistance, must wear a face mask/face covering, sanitize hands frequently, and maintain adequate distance whenever possible.
- If not already being worn, a face mask/face covering must be provided to an injured Athlete (unless in medical distress).
- The medical facility and ambulance will be managed in accordance with the requirements from the local health authorities.



Additional Recommended Best Practices for Vaulting Competition Organizers and Participants

The following recommended best practices are intended for application in addition to the [Recommended Best Practices](#) outlined in the main USEF COVID-19 Action Plan document. These additional best practices are provided to assist Vaulting Competition Organizers and Participants with determining risks and developing measures specific to Vaulting that mitigate those risks. Please note these are not mandatory, however USEF strongly encourages their implementation.

C.7. Considerations for Facilities, Staff, Officials & Volunteers

- **Changing Rooms**
 - Dedicated changing rooms in compliance with the Minor Athlete Protection (MAAP) Policies, used by athletes to recover and get changed between events should be made available and be large enough to accommodate social distancing.
 - Rooms should be clearly marked and accessible only to accredited Vaulters and Longeurs.
 - A cleaning procedure must be put in place by the Competition Organizer to include the cleaning of these rooms several times per day and at the end of every competition day.
 - When possible, it is highly encouraged that Vaulters arrive at the competition grounds dressed in vaulting competition attire, compete, and leave the grounds in their vaulting competition attire.
- **Ground Jury/Officials Area**
 - Vaulting Judges and scribes should bring their own pens, notebooks, etc.; sharing of equipment should not be permitted
 - Face masks/face coverings and hand sanitizer should be provided to each judge and scribe. Face masks must be worn by each official and scribe.
 - The use of headsets to facilitate the communication between judges and scribes is highly recommended in order to accommodate compliance with social distancing requirements.
 - At each rotation of judges and scribes, the table, chairs and all materials should be carefully cleaned with sanitizing solution.
- **Stewards and Technical Delegates**
 - Stewards or Technical Delegates (TDs) should sanitize hands frequently and maintain adequate distance whenever possible. Stewards and TDs must wear face masks/face coverings at all times.
 - All equipment checks or inspections are to be performed visually.



Additional Recommended Best Practices for Vaulting Competitions - continued

- **Prize Giving and Awards**

- Consider not holding a prize-giving ceremony. If a prize-giving ceremony must be planned, the protocol should take into account the social distancing and hygiene necessary to reduce the risk of Covid-19 transmission.
 - If held, limit the number of participants to a strict minimum, require the use of face masks/face coverings for everyone, and maintain social distancing at all times.
 - No physical contact, hand shaking or hugging between or among participants, coaches, longeurs, etc.
 - Prizes, ribbons, or rosettes should be avoided, but if used, properly cleaned prior to distribution.
 - All participants should clean their hands with sanitizer before entering the arena and upon leaving.



US Equestrian Federation
Equestrian Sport: Experience with Risk Management and
Communicable Disease Outbreak Mitigation
May 4, 2020

The United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) is recognized by the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee as the National Governing Body for equestrian sport under the Ted Stevens Amateur Sport Act and by the Fédération Équestre Internationale (FEI) as the National Federation under the International Olympic Committee.

The USEF requires organizers of its licensed competitions to operate in full compliance with all federal, state, and local requirements as well as the guidelines and recommendations provided by the World Health Organization (WHO), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This document is intended to provide an understanding of how equestrian sport operates and also to demonstrate its experience with identifying and mitigating risks associated with communicable disease outbreaks in horses.

The USEF represents 29 different equestrian breeds and disciplines, ensuring fairness, safety, and enjoyment of horse sports for over 185,000 members. USEF licenses over 2,300 competitions annually, promulgates the rules by which these breeds and disciplines function, operates a well-respected equine anti-doping program, and licenses over 2,200 officials who judge and steward competitions.

Ensuring the safety and welfare of our members and their equine partners is the top priority for USEF. As such, we have been at the forefront of developing programs to protect our athletes and their horses from all forms of abuse. Additionally, USEF has extensive experience working with federal, state, and local government agencies to mitigate risks associated with equine infectious diseases that can have devastating effects, including fatality, on equine athletes.

Equestrian Competitions – Environment & Constituency

The majority of equestrian competitions operate in an outdoor environment, at open-air venues that encompass acres of open space. This environment makes it highly conducive to maintaining social distancing and ensuring application of other best practices focused on mitigating the risk of communicable disease transmission, including the COVID-19 virus. While some competitions operate in indoor facilities, even those are typically situated on ample open space that provides the same benefits as outdoor venues. With limited exception, equestrian sport involves no close, sustained contact (human-to-human) between participants and involves activity performed individually. Any equipment used by participants can easily be sanitized between each use.

Additionally, as a sport, our constituents and stakeholders understand the necessity of restricting and even prohibiting fans and spectators at competition venues during times of disease outbreak. The industry is unified in its position with respect to the COVID-19 situation that spectators and fans must be prohibited from attending equestrian competitions and events until such time that it is deemed safe and is authorized by federal, state, and local authorities.

Regardless of whether activity occurs outdoors or indoors, social distancing is an inherent component of equestrian competitions. Additionally, equestrians are well-known for their dedication and commitment to their community and they willingly make the sacrifices necessary to ensure the safety and welfare of their fellow equestrians and their horses. This has been evidenced by the community's united response to past equine infectious disease outbreaks which presented similarly devastating consequences for horses as the COVID-19 virus has for humans.

US Equestrian is Uniquely Positioned to Monitor and Regulate

Because the USEF is recognized as the National Governing Body for equestrian sport in the United States, reporting structures and regulatory authority are built-in components of the USEF-licensed competition environment. USEF has a well-established system of rules, licensing requirements, policies, and procedures as well as robust mechanisms for their enforcement. Its constituents are accustomed to the processes as well as the requirements for compliance.

Case Studies: USEF Experience with Virus Mitigation

Equestrian sport faced serious challenges due to an outbreak in the equine population of the Equine Herpesvirus Type 1 (EHV-1) in Florida in 2007, across 19 Western states in 2011, and in Kentucky in 2013. EHV-1 is described as a highly contagious pathogen that is ubiquitous in horse populations throughout the world. Infections in horses can result in a variety of ailments that include respiratory disease, abortions, neonatal deaths and the neurologic disease. The neurologic form of the EHV-1 virus is called Equine Herpes Myeloencephalopathy (EHM) and is especially dangerous due to its high mortality rate

Due to the potentially life-threatening neurological complications associated with the EHV-1 virus, US Equestrian worked with state authorities and competition organizers across the nation to enact protocols to mitigate the risk of transmittal of the virus at USEF-licensed competitions.

Florida - 2007

In Florida specifically, protocols implemented were the result of collaboration between the USEF, the Florida Department of Agriculture and competition organizers. Together, they created a health certification form which had to accompany every horse upon its initial arrival at a USEF-licensed competition show grounds in Florida. It required the signature and stamp of a licensed veterinarian. This certification was required in addition to the Official Interstate Health Certificate required to enter the State of Florida, not as a substitute for it.

Western U.S. Outbreak – 2011

In early May of 2011, several horses attending a National Championship Cutting event in Ogden, Utah were diagnosed with EHV-1 and EHM upon return from the competition to their home states. Animal Health Officials from all 19 affected states were notified and those officials contacted the owners of all horses that attended the event. Standardized recommendations developed by state and local officials, were implemented across the western half of the country to isolate exposed horses, monitor them for clinical signs of EHV-1, and coordinate with private veterinary practitioners to test and treat affected horses. Additionally, stringent biosecurity procedures were recommended for premises with suspected and confirmed cases to mitigate further disease spread.

These same biosecurity measures were successfully implemented at USEF-licensed competitions which continued to operate around the country and in the affected Western U.S. states despite the outbreak. Protocols implemented included (but were not limited to) instituting foot baths for personnel entering and exiting horse stalls, and twice daily temperature checks on all horses on the competition grounds performed and recorded by officiating veterinary staff. Competitors, support staff, and competition management all worked collaboratively and as a result, competitions were able to operate for the duration of the outbreak. By the end of June 2011, the USDA declared that disease spread in connection with the Ogden, UT incident had been fully contained. As the [USDA's Final Situation Report](#) states, of the 421 horses primarily exposed at the Utah event and the 1,685 horses with secondary or tertiary exposure, only 13 (less than 1%) died or were humanely destroyed due to complications from EHV-1 or EHM contraction.

Kentucky - 2013

In 2013, alerts of EHM being diagnosed in multiple states were issued and horses of different breeds, representing vastly different disciplines and activities were affected.

In Kentucky, the apparent increased frequency of disease and severity of symptoms being seen led Kentucky State Veterinarian Robert Stout to conclude that extra precautions needed to be initiated and implemented to help mitigate the associated risk.

Kentucky facility managers and the managers of USEF-licensed competitions scheduled to be held in Kentucky had to immediately review their biosecurity practices and if needed, elevate their biosecurity plan to minimize opportunity of horses having direct or indirect contact with one another. Indirect contact included common water and feed sources as well as shared equipment and common areas. The goal of a biosecurity plan was to prevent the transmission of infectious agents among individuals.

The respective groups collectively operated with elevated regulatory surveillance and equine health inspection activity at events. Exhibitors were able to expedite their passage through inspection points by having their health documents organized and horses loaded in a manner that allowed visual inspection. In addition to the surveillance and inspection activity, USEF worked closely with competition managers and veterinarians to ensure immediate notification and quick response to any suspected communicable disease.

As an additional preventive measure, USEF encouraged horsemen to consult their veterinarians to determine whether there was a need or benefit to stimulating an immune response by vaccinating against EHV-1. While USEF acknowledged that the available vaccines' labels made no claim to prevent neurologic disease, based on USEF's experience managing outbreaks of this disease and in consultation with infectious disease experts and research scientists, USEF continued to be of the opinion that the vaccine provided a meaningful level of efficacy and might aid in reducing the impact of a disease incident.

Mitigation Efforts – Summary & Outcome

In all three of these previous situations, the steps taken by USEF, state authorities, and competition organizers reduced the risks associated with transmittal of EHV-1 in a manner that permitted equestrian competitions to successfully operate while also protecting the safety and welfare of the horses we cherish.

Additionally, an outcome of these previous experiences resulted in creation of a centralized web-based database and resource center specific to equine disease outbreaks. Partnering with the American Association of Equine Practitioners and working in collaboration with state animal health officials across the country, USEF built and launched the Equine Disease Communication Center in 2014, and USEF continues to support and maintain this website today. This robust tool includes recommendations for best practices specific to equestrian events. (e.g., a [Biosecurity Toolkit for Equine Events](#) prepared by the California Department of Food and Agriculture).

Application of Methodology to COVID-19

Establishing best practices and protocols for humans in our current environment is strikingly similar to what we accomplished for EHV-1 and EHM in 2007, 2011, and 2013. The approach is the same, reduce risk by implementing best practices and protocols in order to protect the safety and welfare of humans and mitigate virus spread, while successfully operating equestrian competitions.

To this end, we have been working collaboratively with medical professionals, veterinarians, and competition organizers to develop the attached *US Equestrian COVID-19 Action Plan - Requirements and Recommendations for Operating USEF-Licensed Competitions in the COVID-19 Environment*. This is a fluid document that will be modified and adapted as the environment continues to change.

Additionally, the FEI and USEF's Chief Medical Officer have been coordinating with health officials at the WHO to custom-tailor an existing [WHO Mass Gathering for Sports Risk Assessment Tool](#) and mitigation checklist tool for application within the equestrian environment. This tool, anticipated to launch sometime in early May, will provide equestrian organizations and individual competition organizers with the ability to access line-by-line interactive tools and resources and ultimately produce a risk versus mitigation report.

The equestrian community, and specifically the USEF-licensed competition environment, has a proven record for seriously and responsibly meeting the challenges of communicable disease outbreaks and implementing meaningful methods to reduce risk. Our community is ideally positioned to meet the challenges of the COVID-19 outbreak by identifying and mitigating the risks associated with this pandemic so that we can resume successfully operating equestrian competitions throughout the United States.

Guidance for the use of the WHO Mass Gathering Sports Addendum Risk Assessment tools in the context of COVID-19

Guidance for organizers of sports events planning mass gatherings during the current outbreak of COVID-19

Routine planning for mass gatherings includes conducting risk assessments to determine the overall risk of disease spread. In view of the current outbreak of COVID-19, a disease-specific and event-specific risk assessment and mitigation checklist has been developed for use by host countries and organizers of mass gathering, to assess the specific risk of COVID-19.

This tool includes all factors from the general WHO risk assessment and mitigation checklist for mass gatherings as well as additional factors relating to sporting events, to enable event organizers to determine a more accurate overall risk score.

The following risk assessment and mitigation checklist should be used in conjunction with the WHO Mass Gathering Sports Addendum Guidelines. In order to accurately provide answers the following risk assessment and mitigation checklist, organizers must be knowledgeable on the current COVID-19 outbreak. The organizers should reference the daily global COVID-19 situation reports provided by WHO as well as the national COVID-19 situation reports, if available.

The tool must be completed in this Excel spreadsheet (see following tabs), as the scores are automatically calculated there. After the tools have been completed, the scores you receive in the Excel spreadsheet for both sections will need to be entered into the decision matrix found on the final tab ("Overall risk scores") for the overall risk score to be determined.

It must be ensured that this risk assessment is conducted with input from local public health authorities and that the necessary personnel with expertise in mass gatherings, risk assessment, epidemiology, and infectious disease control measures are included from the initial stages of planning.

For the overall determination, factors under consideration include:

- the current stage of the COVID-19 outbreak and known transmission dynamics
- the geographical distribution and number of participants, and their individual risk profile
- the risk assessment tool
- the mitigation measures that are currently in place or feasible

It is important to remember that while mitigation measures can reduce the risk of COVID-19 infections, they cannot completely eliminate the threat. It is WHO's view that all countries with community transmission should seriously consider postponing or reducing mass gatherings that bring people together and have the potential to amplify disease and support the recommended best practice of physical distancing. Any decision

will be supported through the use of WHO tools, in particular the Risk Assessment for Mass Gatherings during COVID-19.

Mass gathering risk assessment for COVID-19: addendum for sporting events

The questions below will enable sport event organizers to review the additional considerations specific to sporting events involving mass gatherings, and thus inform their risk assessment of COVID-19 associated with the event. This will help organizers to understand and manage any additional risk from COVID-19.

The risk assessment should be reviewed and reassessed regularly during the planning phase and updated immediately prior to the transition to the operational phase, especially in light of the rapidly evolving nature of the outbreak. Reference should be made to the latest technical guidance and situation reports on the WHO website.

The risk assessment for COVID-19 associated with the sporting event must be coordinated and integrated with the host country's national risk assessment for COVID-19. The person completing the questionnaire should include input from the local public health authorities, consult WHO's latest technical guidance and ensure that there is an up-to-date evaluation of the epidemiological situation.

Risk assessment

Please answer Yes (1) or No (0) to the following questions to determine a risk assessment score that incorporates factors specific to mass gathering sporting events

| Additional risk of COVID-19 to the mass gathering sporting event | Yes (1)/No (0) | Score |
|---|----------------|----------|
| Will the event be held in a country that has documented active local transmission of COVID-19 (community) | | 0 |
| Will the event be held in a single venue or multiple venues/cities/countries? | | 0 |
| Will the event include international participants (athletes and spectators) from countries that have documented active local transmission of COVID-19 | | 0 |
| Will the event include a significant number of participants (athletes or spectators) at higher risk of severe COVID-19 disease (e.g., people over 65) | | 0 |
| Will the event include sports that are considered at higher risk of spread for COVID-19 (eg, contact sports)? | | 0 |
| Will the event be held indoors? | | 0 |
| Total COVID-19 risk score | | 0 |

Mass gathering mitigation checklist for COVID-19: addendum for sporting events

Mitigation measures assess the current effort and planning to reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19 disease for the event. As mitigation measures can reduce the overall risk of the mass gathering contributing to the spread of COVID-19, they should be taken into account after the risk assessment has occurred to gain a clearer understanding of the overall risk of transmission and further spread of COVID-19, should the mass gathering be held. Together with the risk assessment score, the mitigation measure will contribute to the decision matrix and influence the assessment of the overall risk of transmission and further spread of COVID-19 in relation to the mass gathering.

| Topic | Key consideration | Score Yes/Completed (2), Maybe/In progress (1), No/Not considered (0) | Weightin g | Total score | Comments |
|---|---|--|---------------|----------------|---|
| Understanding of the overview of the current COVID-19 situation by the event organizers | Have the relevant organizers and responsible staff been informed about the latest available guidance on the COVID-19 outbreak (official web resources available from WHO, CDC, ECDC, UN, local public health authorities)? And are the organizers and staff concerned committed to following the available guidance? | | 1 | 0 | (https://www.who.int/publications-detail/key-planning-recommendations-for-mass-gatherings-in-the-context-of-the-current-covid-19-outbreak) |
| | Are organizers aware of global and local daily situation reports as provided by WHO or local public health authorities? | | 1 | 0 | |
| | Do the organizers and responsible staff understand the risks and transmission routes of COVID-19, the steps that event attendees can take to limit spread, the recognized best practices (including respiratory etiquette, hand hygiene, physical distancing, etc.), and the travel restrictions adopted by different countries that may affect the mass gathering? | | 1 | 0 | |
| | Has a contingency medical response plan for COVID-19 been developed for this mass gathering sporting event? | | 3 | 0 | |
| | Does the contingency medical response plan include information about how attendees should interact with the host country healthcare system (e.g. hotline/helpline telephone number, medical teams and first-aid points for the mass gathering, local health care system)? | | 3 | 0 | |
| | Is there an Emergency COVID-19 Outbreak Response Coordinator/Team in the organizing committee or other structure for the mass gathering with defined roles and responsibilities, coordinating the health preparedness and response planning for the outbreak? | | 2 | 0 | |
| | Has the host country or organizer requested support from WHO and/or local public health authorities? | | 3 | 0 | |
| | Have the organizers of the mass gathering event acquired the following supplies to help reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19? | | | | |
| | Personal protective equipment (e.g. masks, gloves, gowns) for onsite medical personnel | | 3 | 0 | |
| | Bins for safe disposal of hygienic materials (e.g. tissues, towels, sanitary products) in washrooms and changing rooms | | 3 | 0 | |
| If a person feels unwell/ shows symptoms of an acute respiratory infection during the event: | Hand sanitizers and alcohol rubs for all entrances and throughout the venue | | 3 | 0 | |
| | Is there a procedure for athletes or spectators to clearly identify whom to contact and how to do so if they or other event participants feel unwell? | | 3 | 0 | |
| | Is there a protocol on whom meeting organizers should contact in the host country to report suspected cases and request testing and epidemiological investigations? | | 3 | 0 | |
| | Are first-aid services or other medical services in-place and equipped to support patients with respiratory symptoms? | | 2 | 0 | |
| | Are there isolation rooms or mobile isolation units available onsite? | | 2 | 0 | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| Event emergency preparedness and response plans | Are there any designated medical facilities that manage patients with COVID-19 infection in the host country? | | 2 | 0 |
| | Are there transportation services with trained medical professionals available to transport critically ill patients with severe acute respiratory infections to a hospital or to evacuate them from the host country, if necessary? | | 2 | 0 |
| | Has a cleaning schedule been developed to ensure the venue is clean and hygienic – wiping surfaces and any equipment regularly with disinfectant is strongly recommended (before, during and after the event and between each round of competition)? | | 3 | 0 |
| | Are there established screening measures , including temperature checks in place for participants at the point of entry, venues, routes and on-site medical facilities (first-aid points)? (Please specify in Comments what these screening measures include) | | 3 | 0 |
| | Is the host country conducting COVID-19 laboratory diagnostic tests ? (If Yes, please specify in comments the type of COVID-19 diagnostic test used) | | 3 | 0 |
| | Does the host country have a national public health emergency preparedness and response plan that can address severe respiratory diseases, including COVID-19? | | 2 | 0 |
| | Is there a preliminary agreement by the host country to provide care for any COVID-19 cases connected with the mass gathering? | | 3 | 0 |
| | If the event is for a duration of 14 days or longer, does the medical response plan for the event include resources and protocols for managing all public health interventions that would be necessary and supporting the national public health authorities if participants are infected and become unwell at the event? (If the event is for less than 14 days, please score 0) | | 3 | 0 |
| | If the event is for less than 14 days, does the medical response plan include protocols for organizers to notify all participants of possible exposure to COVID-19 if the organizers are made aware of any suspected or confirmed cases that attended the event? (If the event is for 14 days or longer, please score 0) | | 3 | 0 |
| | Is there an established mechanism for collaboration and coordination between the health and security sectors , which is considered as crucial? | | 2 | 0 |
| Stakeholder and partner coordination | Are there agreed, clear and easily understood processes in place for reporting to external multi-sectoral stakeholders (including surveillance authorities, WHO, CDC, ECDC, etc.) and disseminating risk communication messages (Media)? | | 2 | 0 |
| | Is there a decision-making authority/body and an agreed procedure to modify, restrict, postpone or cancel the mass gathering sporting event related to the evolving COVID-19? Are there arrangements to activate a strategic health operations centre if there are suspected COVID-19 cases in connection with the sporting mass gathering? | | 3 | 0 |
| Command and control | Have the mass gathering organizers and staff undergone training and exercises on personal safety procedures and emergency mitigation measures (including those specifically listed in this checklist)? | | 2 | 0 |
| | Is there a risk communication strategy for the sporting mass gathering in regard to COVID-19? | | 3 | 0 |
| Risk communication | Is there a designated person(s) to lead media activities and tasked with managing all external communications with national and international government officials, the general public, and the media? (If yes, please identify the spokesperson in comments) | | 2 | 0 |
| | Has there been monitoring of national and international media and social media established for rumours to be able to counter them early? (Please explain in the comments what protocols are in place for counter messaging) | | 2 | 0 |

| | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| | Has coordination been set up with major official media channels and social media sites such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram so that messaging can be coordinated with, and assisted by, the platforms to provide targeted messaging from organizers (including messaging to counter fake news and rumours, and proactive messaging about the status of the mass gathering, including changes)? | 2 | 0 | |
| Public health awareness of COVID-19 before and during the event | Has public health advice on clinical features of COVID-19, preventive measures, especially respiratory etiquette, hand hygiene practices, and physical distancing, been shared with all staff involved in the event, athletes, the public, and personnel of all relevant stakeholders? | 3 | 0 | |
| | Has information on the at-risk populations been provided to all athletes, the public and others so they may make an informed decision on their attendance based on their personal health status? | 3 | 0 | |
| | Has public advice included information on the meaning of the following measures: quarantine, self-isolation and self-monitoring ? | 2 | 0 | |
| | Are there any surge arrangements in place in the event of a public health emergency during the mass gathering - (i.e. suspected and confirmed cases of COVID-19? | | | |
| Surge capacity | Do these surge arrangements include funding for mitigation measures? | 3 | 0 | |
| | Do these surge arrangements include stockpiles of equipment (e.g. personal protective equipment, etc.) | 3 | 0 | |
| | Do these surge arrangements include training of extra staff? | 2 | 0 | |
| | Do these surge arrangements include volunteers? | 2 | 0 | |
| Specific mitigation measures | Will there be daily health checks of athletes/competitors? | 2 | 0 | |
| | Will the athletes be separated from other groups , such as officials, support staff and spectators, to limit transmission? | 2 | 0 | |
| | Are there measures in place to limit the sharing of equipment, water bottles, towels, etc. ? | 3 | 0 | |
| | Will athletes be given closed containers to allow for the safe disposal or storing of all hygienic materials (e.g. tissues, towels, etc.)? | 3 | 0 | |
| | Will the sporting event have designated seating for all spectators? | 3 | 0 | |
| | Does the designated seating provided allow for physical distancing between spectators (minimum of 1 metre)? | 2 | 0 | |
| | Have pre-travel health checks been performed on all athletes to ensure underlying co-morbidities, medications, allergies, etc. are documented? | 2 | 0 | |
| | | 2 | 0 | |
| Sum of mitigation measures | | 0 | 0 | |
| Total mitigation score (%) | | | 0 | |

Mass gathering mitigation checklist for COVID-19: addendum for sporting events

Mitigation measures assess the current effort and planning to reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19 disease for the event. As mitigation measures can reduce the overall risk of the mass gathering contributing to the spread of COVID-19, they should be taken into account after the risk assessment has occurred to gain a clearer understanding of the overall risk of transmission and further spread of COVID-19, should the mass gathering be held. Together with the risk assessment score, the mitigation measure will contribute to the decision matrix and influence the assessment of the overall risk of transmission and further spread of COVID-19 in relation to the mass gathering.

| Topic | Key consideration | Score Yes/Completed (2), Maybe/In progress (1), No/Not considered (0) | Weightin g | Total score | Comments |
|---|---|--|---------------|----------------|--|
| Understanding of the overview of the current COVID-19 situation by the event organizers | Have the relevant organizers and responsible staff been informed about the latest available guidance on the COVID-19 outbreak (official web resources available from WHO, CDC, ECDC, UN, local public health authorities)? And are the organizers and staff concerned committed to following the available guidance? | | 1 | 0 | (https://www.who.int/publications-detail/key-planning-recommendations-for-mass-gatherings-in-the-context-of-the-current-covid-19-outbreak) |
| | Are organizers aware of global and local daily situation reports as provided by WHO or local public health authorities? | | 1 | 0 | |
| | Do the organizers and responsible staff understand the risks and transmission routes of COVID-19, the steps that event attendees can take to limit spread, the recognized best practices (including respiratory etiquette, hand hygiene, physical distancing, etc.), and the travel restrictions adopted by different countries that may affect the mass gathering? | | 1 | 0 | |
| | Has a contingency medical response plan for COVID-19 been developed for this mass gathering sporting event? | | 3 | 0 | |
| | Does the contingency medical response plan include information about how attendees should interact with the host country healthcare system (e.g. hotline/helpline telephone number, medical teams and first-aid points for the mass gathering, local health care system)? | | 3 | 0 | |
| | Is there an Emergency COVID-19 Outbreak Response Coordinator/Team in the organizing committee or other structure for the mass gathering with defined roles and responsibilities, coordinating the health preparedness and response planning for the outbreak? | | 2 | 0 | |
| | Has the host country or organizer requested support from WHO and/or local public health authorities? | | 3 | 0 | |
| | Have the organizers of the mass gathering event acquired the following supplies to help reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19? | | | | |
| | Personal protective equipment (e.g. masks, gloves, gowns) for onsite medical personnel | | 3 | 0 | |
| | Bins for safe disposal of hygienic materials (e.g. tissues, towels, sanitary products) in washrooms and changing rooms | | 3 | 0 | |
| | Hand sanitizers and alcohol rubs for all entrances and throughout the venue | | 3 | 0 | |
| | If a person feels unwell/ shows symptoms of an acute respiratory infection during the event: | | | | |
| | Is there a procedure for athletes or spectators to clearly identify whom to contact and how to do so if they or other event participants feel unwell? | | 3 | 0 | |
| | Is there a protocol on whom meeting organizers should contact in the host country to report suspected cases and request testing and epidemiological investigations? | | 3 | 0 | |
| | Are first-aid services or other medical services in-place and equipped to support patients with respiratory symptoms? | | 2 | 0 | |
| | Are there isolation rooms or mobile isolation units available onsite? | | 2 | 0 | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| Event emergency preparedness and response plans | Are there any designated medical facilities that manage patients with COVID-19 infection in the host country? | | 2 | 0 |
| | Are there transportation services with trained medical professionals available to transport critically ill patients with severe acute respiratory infections to a hospital or to evacuate them from the host country, if necessary? | | 2 | 0 |
| | Has a cleaning schedule been developed to ensure the venue is clean and hygienic – wiping surfaces and any equipment regularly with disinfectant is strongly recommended (before, during and after the event and between each round of competition)? | | 3 | 0 |
| | Are there established screening measures , including temperature checks in place for participants at the point of entry, venues, routes and on-site medical facilities (first-aid points)? (Please specify in Comments what these screening measures include) | | 3 | 0 |
| | Is the host country conducting COVID-19 laboratory diagnostic tests ? (If Yes, please specify in comments the type of COVID-19 diagnostic test used) | | 3 | 0 |
| | Does the host country have a national public health emergency preparedness and response plan that can address severe respiratory diseases, including COVID-19? | | 2 | 0 |
| | Is there a preliminary agreement by the host country to provide care for any COVID-19 cases connected with the mass gathering? | | 3 | 0 |
| | If the event is for a duration of 14 days or longer, does the medical response plan for the event include resources and protocols for managing all public health interventions that would be necessary and supporting the national public health authorities if participants are infected and become unwell at the event? (If the event is for less than 14 days, please score 0) | | 3 | 0 |
| | If the event is for less than 14 days, does the medical response plan include protocols for organizers to notify all participants of possible exposure to COVID-19 if the organizers are made aware of any suspected or confirmed cases that attended the event? (If the event is for 14 days or longer, please score 0) | | 3 | 0 |
| | Is there an established mechanism for collaboration and coordination between the health and security sectors , which is considered as crucial? | | 2 | 0 |
| Stakeholder and partner coordination | Are there agreed, clear and easily understood processes in place for reporting to external multi-sectoral stakeholders (including surveillance authorities, WHO, CDC, ECDC, etc.) and disseminating risk communication messages (Media)? | | 2 | 0 |
| | Is there a decision-making authority/body and an agreed procedure to modify, restrict, postpone or cancel the mass gathering sporting event related to the evolving COVID-19 suspected COVID-19 cases in connection with the sporting mass gathering? | | 3 | 0 |
| | Are there arrangements to activate a strategic health operations centre if there are suspected COVID-19 cases in connection with the sporting mass gathering? | | 2 | 0 |
| Command and control | Have the mass gathering organizers and staff undergone training and exercises on personal safety procedures and emergency mitigation measures (including those specifically listed in this checklist)? | | 3 | 0 |
| | Is there a risk communication strategy for the sporting mass gathering in regard to COVID-19? | | 3 | 0 |
| | Is there a designated person(s) to lead media activities and tasked with managing all external communications with national and international government officials, the general public, and the media? (If yes, please identify the spokesperson in comments) | | 2 | 0 |
| Risk communication | Has there been monitoring of national and international media and social media established for rumours to be able to counter them early? (Please explain in the comments what protocols are in place for counter messaging) | | 2 | 0 |

| | | | | |
|---|--|---|----------|--|
| | Has coordination been set up with major official media channels and social media sites such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram so that messaging can be coordinated with, and assisted by, the platforms to provide targeted messaging from organizers (including messaging to counter fake news and rumours, and proactive messaging about the status of the mass gathering, including changes)? | 2 | 0 | |
| Public health awareness of COVID-19 before and during the event | Has public health advice on clinical features of COVID-19, preventive measures, especially respiratory etiquette, hand hygiene practices, and physical distancing, been shared with all staff involved in the event, athletes, the public, and personnel of all relevant stakeholders? | 3 | 0 | |
| | Has information on the at-risk populations been provided to all athletes, the public and others so they may make an informed decision on their attendance based on their personal quarantine, self-isolation and self-monitoring? | 3 | 0 | |
| | Has public advice included information on the meaning of the following measures: quarantine, self-isolation and self-monitoring? | 2 | 0 | |
| | Are there any surge arrangements in place in the event of a public health emergency during the mass gathering - (i.e. suspected and confirmed cases of COVID-19? | | | |
| Surge capacity | Do these surge arrangements include funding for mitigation measures? | 3 | 0 | |
| | Do these surge arrangements include stockpiles of equipment (e.g. personal protective equipment, etc.) | 3 | 0 | |
| | Do these surge arrangements include training of extra staff? | 2 | 0 | |
| | Do these surge arrangements include volunteers? | 2 | 0 | |
| Specific mitigation measures | Will there be daily health checks of athletes/competitors? | 2 | 0 | |
| | Will the athletes be separated from other groups , such as officials, support staff and spectators, to limit transmission? | 2 | 0 | |
| | Are there measures in place to limit the sharing of equipment, water bottles, towels, etc. ? | 3 | 0 | |
| | Will athletes be given closed containers to allow for the safe disposal or storing of all hygienic materials (e.g. tissues, towels, etc.)? | 3 | 0 | |
| | Will the sporting event have designated seating for all spectators? | 3 | 0 | |
| | Does the designated seating provided allow for physical distancing between spectators (minimum of 1 metre)? | 2 | 0 | |
| | Have pre-travel health checks been performed on all athletes to ensure underlying co-morbidities, medications, allergies, etc. are documented? | 2 | 0 | |
| | | | | |
| Sum of mitigation measures | | 0 | 0 | |
| Total mitigation score (%) | | | 0 | |

Mass gathering overall risk score: addendum for sporting events

The decision matrix takes the risk score and the mitigation score to provide a colour determination. This colour determination identifies the total risk of transmission and further spread of COVID-19 in relation to the mass gathering. The "Colour Determination" key below the decision matrix describes the total risk for each colour.

| | |
|--|---|
| Total COVID-19 Risk Score (from "Risk Assessment" Tab) | 0 |
| Total mitigation score (from "Mitigation Checklist" Tab) | 0 |

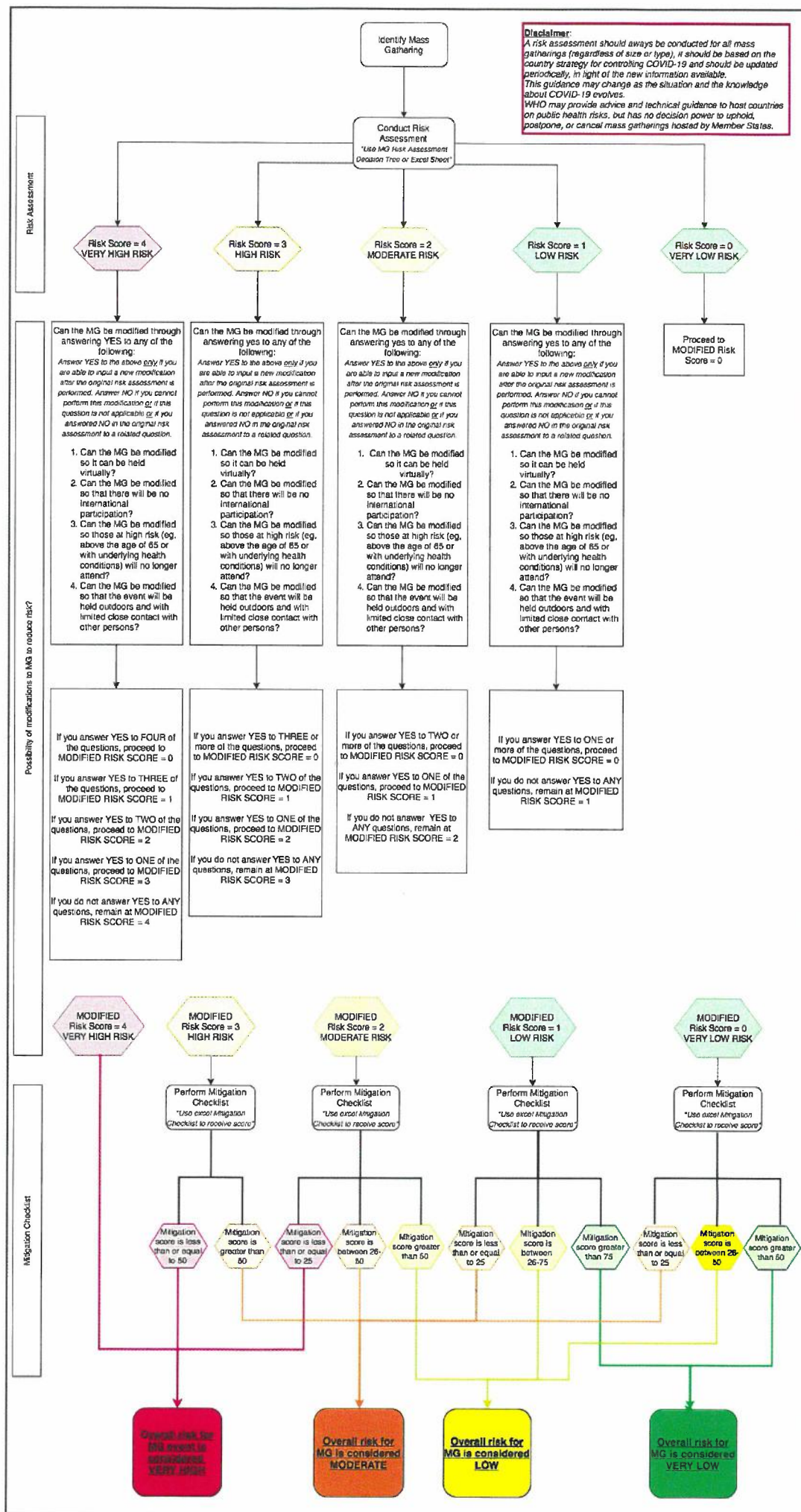
Risk Vs. Mitigation Matrix

| | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| Total Risk Assessment Score 0 - Negligible | Very Prepared to Mitigate COVID-19 Impacts (76-100) | Somewhat Prepared to Mitigate COVID-19 Impacts (51-75) | Somewhat Unprepared to Mitigate COVID-19 Impacts (26-50) | Very Unprepared to Mitigate COVID-19 Impacts (0-25) |
| | Very low | Very low | Very low | Very low |

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1 - Very Low Risk | Very low | Very low | Low | Low |
| 2 - Low Risk | Low | Low | Low | Moderate |
| 3 - Moderate Risk (low-moderate) | Low | Moderate | Moderate | Moderate |
| 4 - Moderate Risk (high-moderate) | Moderate | Moderate | High | Very High |
| 5 - High Risk | High | High | Very High | Very High |
| 6 - Very High Risk | Very High | Very High | Very High | Very High |

| KEY FOR COLOUR DETERMINATION OF OVERALL RISK | |
|--|--|
| VERY LOW | Overall risk of transmission and further spread of COVID-19 in relation to the mass gathering is considered <u>very low</u> . |
| LOW | Overall risk of transmission and further spread of COVID-19 in relation to the mass gathering is considered <u>low</u> . Recommend checking whether mitigation measures can be strengthened. |
| MODERATE | Overall risk of transmission and further spread of COVID-19 in relation to the mass gathering is considered <u>moderate</u> . Recommend <u>significant</u> efforts to improve mitigation measures or reduce risk of transmission (decrease risk assessment score). |

| | |
|-----------|---|
| HIGH | Overall risk of transmission and further spread of COVID-19 in relation to the mass gathering is considered <u>high</u> . Recommend <u>significant efforts</u> to improve <u>both</u> mitigation measures and reduce risk of transmission (decrease risk assessment score). |
| VERY HIGH | Overall risk of transmission and further spread of COVID-19 in relation to the mass gathering is considered <u>very high</u> . |



Considerations for sports federations/sports event organizers when planning mass gatherings in the context of COVID-19

Interim guidance
14 April 2020



Background

This sports addendum should be read in conjunction with the [WHO key planning recommendations for Mass Gatherings in the context of the current COVID-19 outbreak](#) which provides general advice on the public health aspects of such events.

This addendum has been developed to provide additional support to sports event organizers in assessing the specific additional risks, identifying mitigation activities and making an informed evidence-based decision on continuing to host any sporting event. Additional guidance is provided in the specific WHO COVID-19 mass gatherings sports addendum risk assessment tool and mitigation checklist.

Updated [technical guidance on COVID-19](#) should also be consulted. These documents will be reviewed and updated as the pandemic evolves.

Key issues and mitigation options

The key factors for consideration for each sporting event are included in the WHO COVID-19 mass gathering sports addendum risk assessment tool. These key factors address the specific issues that should be taken into consideration when planning a sporting mass gathering event. The table below provides an overview of and background information on some of these additional factors, including mitigation measures that will also be captured during the risk assessment process.

| Key considerations | Comments | Risk factors and mitigation checklist |
|---|--|--|
| Are there sports that could be considered a lower or higher risk? | <p>Lower risk sports where physical distancing is possible, e.g. archery, shooting and some athletics events. These will be less of a risk if physical distancing advice for athletes, coaches and spectators is followed.</p> <p>Higher risk sports include contact sports. Physical and close contacts among players increases risk of transmission of COVID-19.</p> | <p>See details in the mitigation checklist.</p> <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• daily health check of competitors• Physical (at least 1 meter) separating of competitors, officials, spectators and support staff• thorough disinfection and cleaning after/between bouts/competitions• sharing of equipment should be prohibited, in particular ensuring that water bottles and cups are not shared• consider safe utilization of the closed containers for all disposable and reusable hygiene materials (e.g. tissue, towels, etc.). |

| | | |
|-------------------------------|---|---|
| Size of event | <p>The size of the sporting event affects the risk.</p> <p>Physical distancing of spectators must be maintained if spectators and support staff are to be present during the event. Other factors must also be considered across the different target groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participants (includes officials) • spectators • host country (international events) • other participating countries (international events). <p>The numbers of participants relative to spectators in sporting events are usually low. Participants are also a known group so easier to advise, support and follow up if needed so it could be possible to consider holding events in closed stadia.</p> | <p>See details in the mitigation checklist</p> <p>Conducting sporting events with designated seats in arenas with widely spaced spectators for at least 1-metre physical distancing, numbered seats for contact tracing, temperature monitoring at entrances and provision of visual reminders such as stickers or wrist stamps may reduce the possibility of incidental contact.</p> |
| Indoor or outdoor locations | <p>Outdoor events will be better ventilated than indoor events.</p> <p>It may be easier to ensure physical distancing advice is followed in outdoor events with non-designated seating such as horse racing, golf, etc.</p> | <p>See details in the risk assessment</p> <p>WHO advice on physical distancing must be maintained during sporting events</p> |
| Venue facilities | <p>Requires liaison with the venue owners to ensure the facilities do or can comply with WHO and national recommendations during the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> | <p>See details in the mitigation checklist</p> <p>An isolation room/space identified to hold any symptomatic person found at the venue while awaiting patient transport to a medical facility is necessary.</p> <p>Additionally, having a medical post and designated personnel on site is advisable to help assess cases and potential other illness..</p> |
| Demographics (age and health) | <p>Competitors of sporting events tend to be younger and healthier than spectators. However, some competitors, coaches and support staff may have underlying health conditions.</p> <p>The age and health of spectators and other staff will vary.</p> | <p>See details in the mitigation checklist</p> <p>Pre-travel and pre-event health checks are highly encouraged/mandatory to ensure exclusion of those with potential additional risks (co-morbidities, medications, allergies)</p> <p>Spectators can include vulnerable groups so consider advising some at-risk groups not to attend.</p> |
| Risk communication | <p>Ensure public health advice is available before and during the event to all participants, staff, and personnel of all relevant stakeholders</p> | <p>See details in the mitigation checklist and the event organizers recommendations below</p> <p>Display signs to inform spectators and support staff about ways in which they can prevent themselves from getting infected with COVID-19 and passing the virus to others.</p> |

More information in [Q&A on mass gatherings and COVID-19](#).

A checklist of recommended actions is included below for:

- Event organizers
- Participants

Recommendations to event organizers

These measures may help obtain exceptions from authorities to allow athletes to train and participate in other events such as qualifications considered crucial by the organizers. Elite sport is a very controlled environment and organizers should be able to achieve this in a comprehensive way.

Consider the opportunity of using sports ambassadors to promote messaging. It is everyone's responsibility to keep themselves and others healthy and contribute to a successful event.

| Recommendations to event organizers | |
|---|---|
| Pre-event and during event (including venues) | Ensure availability to handwashing, alcohol-based hand gel and hygiene facilities at multiple locations in the event facility and accommodation. |
| | Ensure good hygiene signage across all venues, changing rooms, training facilities, etc. |
| | Provide first aid and medical services, including designated medical providers who are able to triage and refer suspected cases for COVID-19 testing. |
| | Team medical staff or Local Organizing Committee (LOC) staff at venues should check competitors' temperatures each day, any temperatures above 38°C should be reported to the event medical lead/chief medical officer. Follow advice on the management of ill travelers at points of entry (international airports, seaports, and ground crossings) in the context of COVID-19 |
| | Ensure capacity to isolate suspected cases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> team/officials and event staff volunteers, support workers. |
| | Develop and make available risk communication on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> clinical features of COVID-19 and preventive measures, especially respiratory etiquette and hand-hygiene practices the criteria for asking individuals with symptoms to leave the venue or retreat to a designated area information on physical distancing information on the use of face coverings and medical masks the meaning and practical implications of quarantine, self-isolation and self-monitoring in the context of the event, e.g. not attending. |
| | Ensure availability of rubber gloves to team staff and volunteers handling laundry, towels, etc. |
| | Recommend that towels are for single use only. |
| | Provide each participant with a clean water bottle. |
| | Make tissues and containers to dispose of used tissues with lids available on all buses and in all facility changing rooms. |
| | Provide each team with a thermometer (e.g. infrared) and a recording sheet/internet link for athletes' temperatures. If this is not possible, can each team be equipped with a non-contact sensor thermometer? |
| | Determine where an individual diagnosed with COVID-19 will be cared for and isolated |
| | Determine where a contact of a confirmed cases will be quarantined |
| | Determine how athletes and team staff will be notified of a case and COVID-19 situation where they are training. |
| | Define a place where a large number of people can be quarantined in case of a large number of athletes or event staff being exposed |
| | Predetermine emergency contacts with local health authorities. |
| | Medical masks should be ready for use by organizers' medical staff and sick individuals |
| | Provide disinfectant wipes and advise venue cleaning staff to disinfect door handles, toilet handles, bathroom faucet handles, etc. in all areas several times per day. |
| | Consideration of provision of individual prevention packages for athletes containing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> small personal packages of disposable tissues and plastic bags for tissue disposal small laminated prevention card with key reporting information medical mask to wear if they are ill (any symptoms, including fever, cough, shortness of breath) small packages of an alcohol-based hand wipes small package of disposable plastic drinking cups thermometer hand sanitizer. |

| Recommendations to event participants | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Pre-event | <p>Anyone participating in the event (athlete, volunteer, official, food handler etc.) should proactively and regularly check their health status (including taking their temperature, and monitoring for any symptoms).</p> <p>Anyone due to participate in the event who is feeling ill should not come to the venue and be advised on the designated contact online or by telephone.</p> <p>Team staff and volunteer leads should ensure that their teams and volunteers are briefed on the protocols for a suspect and confirmed patients, on infection prevention and control measures and on where to find more information.</p> |
| During the event | <p>Participants should be aware of and cooperate with team medical staff or event organizing staff at venues in taking their own/or competitors' temperatures each day, any temperatures above 38°C to be reported to the event medical lead/chief medical officer. Follow the same approach as the management of ill travelers at points of entry (international airports, seaports, and ground, crossings) in the context of COVID-19</p> <p>Wash hands often with soap and water. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water not available. Hand sanitizer stations should be available throughout the event venue, the accommodation, and on team buses.</p> <p>Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing. Practise respiratory etiquette (maintain distance: at least 1 m), cover coughs and sneezes with disposable tissues or flexed elbow, wash hands). If coughing persists, isolate and seek medical advice.</p> <p>Avoid contact with sick people, including avoiding close contact with those suffering from acute respiratory infections.</p> <p>Avoid contact with anyone if you are ill.</p> <p>Gloves should be worn by team and event staff handling towels or laundry in the team environment.</p> <p>Towels should not be shared.</p> <p>Athletes should not share clothing, bar soap or other personal items.</p> <p>Recommended protocol for the use of water bottles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good team hygiene includes ensuring all players, officials and staff have their own water bottles to prevent the transmission of viruses and bacteria. • Bottles should be labelled and washed (with dishwasher soap) after each practice or game. <p>Advise athletes not to touch their own mouths or nose.</p> <p>Avoid shaking hands or hugging.</p> <p>Avoid steam rooms or saunas.</p> <p>Be aware of regular cleaning of frequently touched items (door handles, elevators, gym equipment, etc.)</p> |

WHO continues to monitor the situation closely for any changes that may affect this interim guidance. Should any factors change, WHO will issue a further update. Otherwise, this interim guidance document will expire 2 years after the date of publication.

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WHO reference number: [WHO/2019-nCoV/Mass_Gatherings_Sports/2020.1](#)

Key planning recommendations for Mass Gatherings in the context of COVID-19

Interim guidance
19 March 2020



Background

Mass gatherings are highly visible events with the potential for serious public health consequences if they are not planned and managed carefully. There is ample evidence that mass gatherings can amplify the spread of infectious diseases. The transmission of respiratory infections, including influenza, has been frequently associated with mass gatherings.¹ Such infections can be transmitted during a mass gathering, during transit to and from the event, and in participants' home communities upon their return.

The purpose of this document is to outline key planning considerations for the organizers of mass gatherings in the context of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. It should be read in conjunction with WHO's Public health for mass gatherings: Key considerations,² which provides general advice on the public health aspects of mass events. It is also adapted from the interim planning considerations that were previously released by WHO addressing mass gatherings in the context of pandemic (H1N1) 2009 influenza and guidance for international meetings attended by individuals from countries affected by Ebola virus. Updated [technical guidance on COVID-19](#) outbreak should also be consulted.

As the COVID-19 outbreak continue to evolve, meeting organizers may want to consider the following three phases in planning appropriate preparedness measures:

1. Planning phase – the period (weeks or months) before the event begins, when operational plans for health and security services during the event are developed, tested, and revised;
2. Operational phase – the period after plans are finalized and the delivery of the event services begins; this may be several weeks before the event commences if teams arrive in advance to complete their training or preparations;
3. Post-event phase – the period after the event finishes when participants are returning to their home countries and organizers are reviewing the event delivery and any follow-up actions that are necessary, as well as reviewing any lessons learned and the event's legacy.

Planning phase

Planning should ensure that robust systems and processes are in place to manage public health issues during mass gatherings. Organizers should review their plans to ensure that they correspond to the most current evidence and recommendations. Additional advice could be sought through consultation with global experts.

General advice on planning for the public health aspects of an event is set out in WHO's key considerations document (mentioned in Section 1). Specific actions to be taken in relation to the COVID 19 outbreak are discussed in this section.

1. Liaison with local and national public health authorities.

- Event organizers should establish direct links with local and national public health authorities. This should include the local provider of health services for the event.
- There should be a nominated liaison person in the organizing team and also one in the designated public health agency. Contact information should be shared, and contacts should be available 24 hours a day.
- Regular contact should be maintained throughout the planning period to share information, risk assessments, and plans.
- Channels of communication between agencies and organizers and with the public should be agreed in advance.

2. Risk assessment

The decision to proceed with a mass gathering or to restrict, modify, postpone, or cancel the event should be based on a thorough risk assessment. Event planners should undertake such an assessment in partnership with local and national public health authorities.

For highly visible or particularly large events, WHO may provide advice and technical support to the host country to help with assessing the public health risks associated with the event.

General considerations include the following.

- A comprehensive risk assessment should be undertaken at the beginning of the planning phase, reviewed regularly during planning, and updated immediately before the handover to the operational phase.
- The risk assessment should include input from the public health authority and should take into account the security assessment for the event.
- In relation to COVID-19, the risk assessment should include consulting WHO's updated technical guidance and ensuring that there is an up-to-date evaluation of the epidemiological situation.
- The risk assessment for the event must be coordinated and integrated with the host country's national risk assessment.

Specific considerations in relation to COVID-19.

Specific information that is necessary for the risk assessment includes:

- the global COVID-19 situation reports as provided by WHO;
- the national COVID-19 situation report.
- The risk assessment for COVID-19 should consider both general features and specific features.
- General features of COVID-19 include:
 - transmission dynamics
 - future likely spread of the epidemic
 - clinical severity
 - treatment options, including available pharmaceuticals.
- potential for prevention, including vaccine.

Specific features of the event that should be considered include:

- crowd density;
- nature of contact between participants (for example, a concert or religious event, indoors or outdoors, the layout of the venue);
- whether the event will be attended by registered and non-registered participants;
- profession of the participants and their possible previous exposure;
- number of participants coming from countries or areas affected by the COVID-19 outbreak within 14 days before the event;
- age of participants; because elderly people who have co-morbid conditions appear to be more seriously affected, mass gatherings composed principally of this cohort may be associated with increased transmission;
- type or purpose of event (for example, sporting, festival, religious, political, cultural);
- duration and mode of travel of participants; if the duration of the mass gathering is longer than the incubation period for COVID-19 infection (14 days), then most event-associated cases would be expected to occur while the event is underway. In contrast, if the duration is shorter, most cases would likely occur after the event as people travel and return to their home communities.

WHO's Public health for mass gatherings: key considerations can be consulted for a detailed discussion of the general principles and elements of risk assessment and management. Additionally, online training is available on [public health preparedness for mass gatherings](#).

3. Specific action plan for COVID-19

Action plans should be developed to mitigate all risks identified in the assessment. Some actions will be the responsibility of the public health authority to deliver, some will be the responsibility of the local health service provider, and the event organizer will be responsible for others; each action plan should specify who is responsible for delivering each action, the timescale for delivery, and how and by whom delivery will be ensured. Action plans should include:

- integration with national emergency planning and response plans for infectious diseases;
- command and control arrangements to facilitate the rapid communication of information and efficient situation analyses and decision-making;
- any appropriate screening requirements for event participants – for example, will participants be screened for COVID-19 symptoms on arrival?
- disease surveillance and detection – for example, how will the disease be recognized and diagnosed in participants?
- treatment – for example, how and where will ill participants be isolated and treated?
- decision trigger points – for example, who will decide whether affected participants can continue or resume their role in the event? What trigger points will indicate the need to reconsider or revise the plans? What would trigger postponement or cancellation of the event?

If the decision is made to proceed with a mass gathering, planning should consider measures to:

- detect and monitor event-related COVID-19;
- reduce the spread of the virus;
- manage and treat ill persons;
- disseminate public health messages specific to COVID-19.

4. Capacity and resource assessment

Some of the capabilities and resources to be considered when planning for an event include the following:

- National health authorities should assess whether additional resources and capacity are needed to deliver appropriate risk-mitigation actions to the local community during and after the event, for example, by adding diagnostic testing capacity, isolation and treatment facilities, and resources for contact tracing.
- Event organizers should assess the capacity needed and the resources available to deliver all specific COVID-19 risk-mitigation actions that arise from the risk assessment.
- Capacity and resources should be coordinated with the public health authority and health service provider to avoid duplication or gaps.

5. Risk communication and community engagement plan

Event organizers should agree with the public health authority how participants and the local population will be kept informed about the health situation, key developments, and any relevant advice and recommended actions.

Operational phase

There are no published experiential data specific to planning and implementing a mass gathering during the current COVID-19 outbreak. However, arrangements must be in place to ensure regular communication between event organizers and the public health authority.

These arrangements should include:

- regular and full sharing of information by organizers and public health authorities;
- arrangements to provide participants with information about how to access health advice;
- arrangements for ongoing, dynamic risk assessments to be conducted by the public health authority and organizers as the event progresses;
- arrangements for communicating with participants and the local population to ensure that messaging is consistent.

To date, there is no scientific evidence to support the screening of participants as a cost-effective measure.

1. Risk communication

Risk communication is an integral part of mass gatherings. The following measures should be considered.

- Key messages for the local population and event participants must be coordinated and consistent.
- Consideration should be given to how messages about risk can be delivered to the population and to participants quickly if an unusual event occurs.

Messaging should include:

- an overall assessment of the local risk;
- advice on preventive measures, especially respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene practices;
- advice about how to access local health care if necessary, including how to do so without creating a risk to health care workers;
- advice on self-isolation and not attending the event if symptoms develop;
- information about disease signs and symptoms, including warning signs of severe disease that require immediate medical attention;
- advice on self-monitoring for symptoms and signs for participants travelling from affected countries, including checking their temperature;
- information that WHO does not currently recommend quarantine for healthy travellers or other travel restrictions;
- information that wearing a face mask is recommended for participants who have respiratory symptoms (for example, cough); it is not recommended for healthy participants.

Event organizers in collaboration with public health authorities may wish to consider whether specific information or advice is needed about the potential risks that persons already at increased risk of severe disease might face in the setting of a mass gathering, especially if the COVID-19 virus is circulating in the community.

More information on COVID-19 risk communication and community engagement can be found in Risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) readiness and response to the 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV).⁵ WHO has developed [advice for the public about COVID-19](#) and [information about myths](#).

2. Surveillance of participants

Some key features to consider for surveillance include the following.

- Detection and monitoring of event-related COVID-19 should be considered in the context of surveillance schemes that are already in place and if new or enhanced surveillance is deemed necessary.
- Organizers will need to work with local public health authorities to ensure that systems are in place to identify indicators of illness arising in the local population or in event participants, such as increases in the number of people experiencing symptoms or a rise in the use of proprietary medicines.
- Surveillance systems will need to operate in real time or near-real time to support rapid response actions.
- Surveillance systems should be linked to risk assessments, so that any abnormal signal in the surveillance systems triggers an immediate revision of the risk assessment.

3. Testing and diagnostic arrangements

Organizers need to consider with the local health authority how and where participants presenting with COVID-19-like symptoms will be tested. Organizers will need to ensure that their health provider has access to appropriate testing tools, probably from the national public health agency. This will also require prior agreement about how to transport specimens or participants to a testing facility.

4. Treatment facilities

Some considerations for treatment facilities include the following:

- Event organizers should consider the need to provide isolation facilities at the event site for participants who develop symptoms and the need to wait for a health assessment. Whether this is necessary depends on the nature of the event and the extent to which the event will provide its own medical services rather than depend on the local health service to do so. Preparing for an isolation facility includes training health care workers, implementing infection control and prevention measures in any health care setting, and preparing personal protective equipment to be used by staff.
- Organizers need to consider where any participant who becomes unwell with COVID-19-like symptoms will be treated and how they will be

transported to a treatment facility. This is likely to be in a national health facility where there is appropriate containment capacity and expertise, so participants will not be able to remain in the event's medical facility. Agreements about any consequent funding issues should be confirmed in advance.

- Participants at events sometimes expect that they will be returned to their home country for medical treatment rather than be treated in the host country; this will not be possible for anyone diagnosed with COVID-19 except through the use of specific medical evacuation flights that have appropriate isolation and containment facilities: such facilities are scarce and expensive and not readily available for illnesses such as COVID-19.
- Organizers need to consider how any affected participants will be transferred home if their illness extends beyond the end of the event and pre-arranged travel is no longer available.
- Event organizers working with public health and health care officials need to assess national capacity to deliver supportive treatment, including admitting participants to an intensive care unit and providing ventilator support. Such care should be provided near the mass gathering if possible.
- National plans for deploying and providing access to medical supplies, such as antibiotics, ventilators, and personal protective equipment should be reviewed.

5. Decision-making

In collaboration with local health authorities, organizers should also agree in advance the circumstances in which risk-mitigation measures would need to be enhanced or the event postponed or cancelled. Prior agreement on potential trigger points will facilitate these discussions if they become necessary.

6. Operational practices for reducing event-related transmission of the COVID-19 virus.

The basic general principles for reducing transmission of the COVID-19 virus are applicable to a mass gathering.

- People should be advised to stay away from the event if they feel ill.
- Persons who feel unwell (that is, have fever and cough) should stay at home and not attend work or school and avoid crowds until their symptoms resolve. This applies to participants as well as staff.
- Promoting appropriate hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette in mass gathering venues requires providing informational materials that reach a range of age groups and varying reading and educational levels. In addition, soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizers and tissues should be easily accessible in all common areas, and especially at medical treatment sites at the event.
- People who become ill while at the event should be isolated.
- Organizers should plan for the likelihood of persons becoming ill with fever and other typical symptoms of COVID-19 during the event. Organizers should consider establishing isolation areas in on-site

medical treatment clinics or facilities where such persons can be initially assessed and triaged. Persons who are ill can be provided with a mask to help contain respiratory droplets generated from coughing and sneezing. The isolation area should be equipped with the necessary supplies to facilitate hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette. In addition, medical staff attending persons who are ill should wear a mask, dispose of it immediately after contact with someone who is ill, and cleanse their hands thoroughly afterwards.

- The usual precautions should be practiced with travellers arriving from international destinations:
 - If travellers have symptoms suggestive of acute respiratory illness before, during or after travel, they should be encouraged to seek medical attention and share their travel history with the health care provider.
 - Public health authorities should provide to travellers information about reducing their general risk of acute respiratory infections through health practitioners, travel health clinics, travel agencies, transportation operators, and at points of entry.
- Crowding should be minimized where possible, and event organizers should consider using distancing measures to reduce close contact among people during the gathering (for example, by increasing the frequency of transport, staggering arrivals, diverting departures, and minimizing congregation at sanitary stations and food and water distribution areas).

Post-event phase

After the conclusion of the mass gathering, the following should be considered:

1. After the event

After the gathering, if public health authorities suspect that transmission of the COVID-19 virus has occurred, organizers and participants should support the response of authorities.

- Meeting organizers must liaise with public health authorities and facilitate the sharing of information about all symptomatic participants (such as their itineraries, contact information, visa procedures, hotel bookings).
- Individuals who develop symptoms during the mass gathering and their stay in the country should isolate themselves, seek medical attention, and inform the appropriate public health authorities about their potential exposure, both in the country where the event was held and upon returning to their country of residence.

2. Risk communication

- It may be necessary both for clinical reasons and under the International Health Regulations to notify the home countries of returning participants of any people who developed COVID 19 while attending the event.

- Organizers also need to ensure that test results reported after the event are notified to the participant and, possibly, to the home country's public health system.

3. Lessons identified

As always, it will be important for lessons from any event to be identified through review after the event so that they can be passed on to future event organizers.

4. Legacy

Organizing mass gatherings during a global health emergency is unusual, but it can be done depending on the risk assessment. Organizers should see any such event as an opportunity to enhance their ways of working and to pass this learning on to both future events and the host country.

2. World Health Organization. [Public health for mass gatherings: key considerations](#). Geneva: World Health Organization; 2015 (accessed 19 February 2020).
3. World Health Organization. [Interim planning considerations for mass gatherings in the context of pandemic \(H1N1\) 2009 influenza](#). Geneva: World Health Organization; 2009 (accessed 19 February 2020).
4. World Health Organization. [Interim guidance for international meetings attended by individuals for Ebola virus disease-affected countries](#). Geneva: World Health Organization; 2014 (accessed 19 February 2020).
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1. Rashid H, Haworth E, Shafi S, Memish ZA, Boov R. Pandemic influenza: mass gatherings and mass infections. *Lancet* 2008;8:526–7.

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Q&A on Mass Gatherings and COVID-19

14 April 2020 | Q&A

How large does a meeting or event need to be in order to be a “mass gathering”?

Does WHO recommend that all international mass gatherings be cancelled because of COVID-19?

What factors should organizers and health authorities look at when assessing whether the risks are acceptable or not?

What if my organization does not have the expertise to assess the risks COVID-19 poses for our planned mass gathering?

If we go ahead with an international mass gathering, what can we do to reduce the risk of participants catching COVID-19?

Where can I find more advice on assessing and managing health risks around international mass gatherings?

What should be the criteria for excluding an athlete or other accredited participant from competing?

Should event organizers arrange screening at venues beyond national government requirements for point of entry (PoE)?

Should event organizers provide COVID-19 testing?

Are there additional safeguards event organizers can implement or recommend to athletes/officials/visitors in the context of COVID-19?

What are the risks arising from public transport to the venue(s)?

WHO TEAM Department of Communications

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Q&A on infection prevention and control for health care workers caring for patients with suspected or confirmed 2019-nCoV

Q&A on COVID-19 and food and agriculture

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Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

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Page last reviewed: May 7, 2020

Content source: [National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases \(NCIRD\), Division of Viral Diseases](#)

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Event Planning and COVID-19: Questions and Answers

Information for Event Planners and Individuals

Updated March 15, 2020

[Printer friendly version](#) 

Planning and Preparedness

What actions should I take to plan for an outbreak?

Creating an emergency plan for mass gatherings and large community events, such as concerts and sporting events, can help protect the health of your staff, attendees, and the local community. This planning should include:

- Encouraging staff and attendees to stay home if sick.
- Developing flexible refund policies for attendees.
- Providing supplies for attendees and staff that can be used to help prevent the spread of germs.
- Consulting local public health officials about your event.

What actions can staff and attendees take to prevent the spread of COVID-19?

Encourage staff and attendees to take [everyday preventive actions](#) to help prevent the spread of respiratory illnesses, such as COVID-19. This includes:

- **Cleaning your hands often.**
- **Avoiding close contact** with people who are sick.
- Staying home when you are sick.
- Covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue or the inside of your elbow.
- Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces.

What are things to consider when determining if an event needs to be postponed or canceled?

Consult with local public health officials and continually assess, based on current conditions, whether to postpone, cancel, or significantly reduce the number of attendees (if possible) at an event or gathering. When determining if you should postpone or cancel a large gathering or event, consider the:

- Overall number of attendees or crowd size.
- Number of attendees who are at higher risk of developing serious illness from COVID-19. This includes older adults and people with underlying health problems such as lung or heart disease and diabetes.

- How close together attendees will be at the event.
- Potential ways to minimize economic impact to attendees, staff, and the local community.
- Amount of spread in local community and the communities from where your attendees are likely to travel.
- Needs and capacity of the local community to host or participate in your event.

Is there information I can share with staff and attendees about COVID-19?


Share these resources to help people understand COVID-19 and steps they can take to help protect themselves:

- [Prevention and Treatment](#)
- [What to Do If You Are Sick](#)
- [Groups at Higher Risk](#)
- [FAQs: Pregnant Women and COVID-19](#)
- [FAQs: Coronavirus Disease-2019 \(COVID-19\) and Children](#)
- [Handwashing: A Family Activity](#)
- [Handwashing: Clean Hands Save Lives](#)

Confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the community

Do I need to cancel an event if there are confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the community?

If there is minimal or moderate spread of COVID-19 in the community, CDC recommends cancelling an:

- event that includes 250 people or more.
 - **3/29/20 UPDATE:** The President's Coronavirus Guidelines for America—Slow the Spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19):
 - [More Information on Mass Gatherings](#)
 - [Read the White House notice](#)  [🔗](#)
- event likely to have 10 or more people who are at higher risk of serious COVID-19 illness. This includes older adults and people with underlying health problems such as lung or heart disease and diabetes.

If there is substantial spread of COVID-19 in the community, CDC recommends cancelling events of any size. See guidance for definitions of [minimal, moderate, and substantial spread](#)  .

Confirmed case of COVID-19 at an event

What steps should I take if an attendee or staff person develops symptoms of COVID-19 while at the event?

If a staff member or attendee becomes sick at your event, separate them from others as soon as possible and until they can go home. Provide them with clean, [disposable facemasks](#)  to wear, if available. If not available, provide them with a tissue or some other way to cover their coughs and sneezes. If needed, contact emergency services for those who need emergency care. Public transportation, shared rides, and taxis should be avoided for sick persons. Be

sure to contact local public health officials regarding the possible case of COVID-19 at your event and how to communicate with staff and attendees about possible exposure to the virus. Read more about [preventing the spread of COVID-19 if someone is sick](#).



What is the best way to clean and disinfect the event space after a confirmed case of COVID-19 at my event?


CDC has guidance for cleaning and disinfecting rooms and areas where a person with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 has visited. See [Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection Recommendations](#).

Event cancellations

When does CDC recommend that I cancel or postpone an event?

If there is minimal or moderate spread of COVID-19 in the community, CDC recommends cancelling an:

- event that includes 250 people or more.
 - **3/16/20 UPDATE:** During the next 15 days, all U.S. events of 10+ people should be cancelled or held virtually.
 - [More Information on Mass Gatherings](#)
 - [Read the White House notice](#)  
- event likely to have 10 or more people who are at higher risk of serious COVID-19 illness. This includes older adults and people with underlying health problems such as lung or heart disease and diabetes.

If there is substantial spread of COVID-19 in the community, CDC recommends cancelling events of any size. See page 9 of CDC's Community Mitigation Framework or definitions of "[minimal, moderate, and substantial spread](#) .

Page last reviewed: March 15, 2020

Content source: [National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases \(NCIRD\), Division of Viral Diseases](#)



Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Get Your Mass Gatherings or Large Community Events Ready

Interim Guidance for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Guidance as of 3/15/2020

Large events and mass gatherings can contribute to the spread of COVID-19 in the United States via travelers who attend these events and introduce the virus to new communities. Examples of large events and mass gatherings include conferences, festivals, parades, concerts, sporting events, weddings, and other types of assemblies. These events can be planned not only by organizations and communities but also by individuals.

Recommendations for [schools](#), [institutes of higher learning](#), or [businesses](#) are available.

[Printer Friendly Version](#) 

Summary of Recent Changes

Revisions were made on 3/12/2020 to reflect the following:

- Highlights vulnerable populations
- Adds a section on “Considerations for Postponing or Cancelling a Mass Gathering”
- Adds a section on discouraging handshakes and high fives (for sporting events)
- Adds standard language regarding disinfection procedures

This interim guidance is based on what is currently known [about the Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will update this interim guidance as needed and as additional information becomes available.

This interim guidance is intended for organizers and staff responsible for planning mass gatherings or large community events in the United States. **A mass gathering is a planned or spontaneous event with a large number of people in attendance that could strain the planning and response resources of the community hosting the event, such as a concert, festival, conference, or sporting event.** Guidance specific to schools and childcare settings, institutions of higher education, and community- and faith-based organizations can be found on [CDC’s website focused on prevention COVID-19 spread in communities](#).

COVID-19 is an emerging respiratory disease and there is more to learn about its transmission, clinical course, and populations at increased risk of disease and complications (see [How COVID-19 Spreads](#)). Everyone can do their part to help plan, prepare, and respond to this emerging public health threat.

[Older adults and persons with severe underlying health conditions](#) are considered to be at increased risk of more serious illness after contracting COVID-19. Priority should be given to ensuring the safety of these groups of people, particularly for any mass gatherings that are expected to have a large number of older adults or persons with underlying conditions.

As the COVID-19 outbreak evolves, CDC strongly encourages event organizers and staff to prepare for the possibility of outbreaks in their communities. Creating an emergency plan for mass gatherings and large community events can help protect you and the health of your event participants and the local community.

CDC has developed recommended actions for preventing the spread of COVID-19 at mass gatherings and large community events. This guidance suggests strategies to help you plan for and implement ways in which to better protect all involved in a mass gathering.

Organizers should continually assess, based on current conditions, whether to postpone, cancel, or significantly reduce the number of attendees (if possible) for mass gatherings. Listed below are some considerations organizers should keep in mind as they make decisions about whether to postpone or cancel an event. If organizers decide to proceed with an event they should consult the “Steps to Plan, Prepare, and Proceed with a Mass Gathering” section of this document.

Considerations for Postponing or Cancelling a Mass Gathering

There are a number of factors to consider when determining the need to postpone or cancel a large gathering. These include:



The overall number of attendees. Larger gatherings (for example, more than 250 people) offer more opportunities for person-to-person contact and therefore pose greater risk of COVID-19 transmission.



The number of people attending who are at greater risk of more serious illness after contracting COVID-19. Older adults and persons with severe pre-existing health conditions are thought to be at increased risk.



The density of attendees within a confined area. Based on what is currently known about the virus, spread from person-to-person happens most frequently among close contacts (within 6 feet).



The potential economic impact to participants, attendees, staff, and the larger community.



The level of transmission in your local community and the level of transmission in the areas from which your attendees will travel. To better understand the level of community transmission in your community (and in the communities from which your attendees will be traveling), consult with your local and/or state public health department.



If there are ways in which to significantly reduce the number of attendees. For example, for sporting events or school concerts, organizers could consider holding the event but significantly reduce the number of audience members.

At a minimal-to-moderate level of community transmission, it is recommended to:



Cancel community-wide mass gatherings (for example, >250 people; **the cutoff threshold is at the discretion of community leadership based on the current circumstances the community is facing and the nature of the event**) or move to smaller groupings.



Cancel gatherings of more than 10 people for organizations that serve **higher-risk populations** .

At a substantial level of community transmission, it is recommended to cancel mass gatherings of any size.

Steps to Plan, Prepare, and Proceed with a Mass Gathering

The details of your emergency operations plan should be based on the size and duration of your events, demographics of the participants, complexity of your event operations, and type of on-site services and activities your event may offer.

Review the existing emergency operations plans for your venues



Meet with the emergency operations coordinator or planning team at your venues. Discuss the emergency operations plans and determine how they may impact aspects of your events, such as personnel, security, services and activities, functions, and resources. Work with the emergency operations coordinator or planning team to prepare for the key prevention strategies outlined in this guidance. Develop a contingency plan that addresses various scenarios described below which you may encounter during a COVID-19 outbreak.



Establish relationships with key community partners and stakeholders. When forming key relationships for your events, include relevant partners such as the local public health department, community leaders, faith-based organizations, vendors, suppliers, hospitals, hotels, airlines, transportation companies, and law enforcement. Collaborate and coordinate with them on broader planning efforts. Clearly identify each partner's role, responsibilities, and decision-making authority. Contact your local public health department for a copy of their outbreak response and mitigation plan for your community. Participate in community-wide emergency preparedness activities.

Address key prevention strategies in your emergency operations plan



Promote the daily practice of everyday preventive actions. Use [health messages and materials developed by credible public health sources such as CDC](#) or your local public health department to encourage your event staff and participants to practice good personal health habits. Consider displaying signs (physical and/or electronic) throughout the event to provide frequent reminders to participants to engage in [everyday preventive actions](#) to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. These include:



- Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- [Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects daily.](#)


Handshakes and “high-fives” are often exchanged at meetings and sporting events, and these can be ways in which COVID-19 can be transmitted from person to person. As a way of decreasing the social pressure to engage in these common behaviors, consider displaying signs (physical and/or electronic) that discourage these actions during the gathering.

Note: Use culturally appropriate messages, materials, and resources.



Provide COVID-19 prevention supplies to event staff and participants. Ensure that your events have supplies for event staff and participants, such as hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, tissues, trash baskets, disposable facemasks, and cleaners and disinfectants. Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects with detergent and water prior to disinfection, especially surfaces that are visibly dirty.

- Routinely clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that are frequently touched. Clean with the cleaners typically used. Use all cleaning products according to the directions on the label.
- For disinfection most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective.
 - A list of products that are EPA-approved for use against the virus that causes COVID-19 is available [here](#)   . Follow the manufacturer’s instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time, etc.).
 - Additionally, diluted household bleach solutions can be used if appropriate for the surface. Follow manufacturer’s instructions for application and proper ventilation. Check to ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser. Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted. Bleach solutions will be effective for disinfection up to 24 hours.
- Prepare a bleach solution by mixing:
 - 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water or
 - 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water
- Additional information on cleaning and disinfection of community facilities can be found on [CDC’s website](#).

Note: [Disposable facemasks](#)  should be kept on-site and used only if someone (worker or attendee) becomes sick at your event. Those who become sick should be immediately isolated from staff and participants who are not sick and given a clean disposable facemask to wear.

Note: Use culturally appropriate messages, materials, and resources.



Plan for staff absences. Develop and implement flexible attendance and sick-leave policies. Event staff need to stay home when they are sick, or they may need to stay home to care for a sick household member or care for their children in the event of school dismissals. Allow staff to work from home when possible. Identify critical job functions and positions and plan for alternative coverage by cross-training staff (similar to planning for holiday staffing). Provide instructions about how and when to safely return to work.



Implement flexible staff attendance and sick-leave policies (if possible). Require staff to stay home if they are sick or caring for a sick household member. Notify staff when you plan to implement [COVID-19 leave policies](#).

Note: Direct staff who get sick with [COVID-19 symptoms](#) to avoid contact with others and to seek medical advice.




Consider alternatives for event staff and participants who are at increased risk for complications from COVID-19. Currently, [older adults and persons with severe underlying health conditions](#) are considered to be at increased risk for severe illness and complications from COVID-19. Event organizers can consider reassigning duties for higher-risk staff to have minimal contact with other persons. People in higher-risk groups should consult with their healthcare provider about attending large events. Consider providing refunds to event participants who are unable to attend because they are at high risk and/or provide information on alternative viewing options.



Promote messages that discourage people who are sick from attending events. This could include electronic messages sent to attendees prior to travel to the event as well as messages requesting that people leave events if they begin to have symptoms of COVID-19, which include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Attendees should be encouraged to seek medical advice promptly by calling ahead to a doctor's office or emergency room to get guidance. See CDC guidance on [what to do when sick with COVID-19](#).

Note: Use culturally appropriate messages, materials, and resources.



If possible, identify a space that can be used to isolate staff or participants who become ill at the event. Designate a space for staff and participants who may become sick and cannot leave the event immediately. Work with partners, such as local hospitals, to create a plan for treating staff and participants who do not live nearby. Include a [plan for separating and caring for vulnerable populations](#). If any staff member or participant becomes sick at your event, separate them from others as soon as possible. Establish procedures to help sick staff or participants leave the event as soon as possible. Provide them with clean, [disposable facemasks](#)  to wear, if available. Work with the local public health department and nearby hospitals to care for those who become sick. If needed, contact emergency services for those who need emergency care. Public transportation, shared rides, and taxis should be avoided for sick persons, and disposable facemasks should be worn by persons who are sick at all times when in a vehicle. Read more about [preventing the spread of COVID-19 if someone is sick](#).

*Note: Providing a sick staff member or event participant with a disposable facemask to wear does **not** replace the need for that person to leave as soon as possible, stay home, and seek medical advice. Wearing a disposable facemask in the workplace or while participating in a large event is not a sufficient infection control measure.*



Plan ways to limit in-person contact for staff supporting your events. Several ways to do this include offering staff the option to telework if they can perform their job duties off-site, using email, and conducting meetings by phone or video conferencing. Reduce the number of staff needed such as staggering shifts for staff who support essential functions and services during events.



Develop flexible refund policies for participants. Create refund policies that permit participants the flexibility to stay home when they are sick, need to care for sick household members, or are at high risk for complications from COVID-19.



Identify actions to take if you need to postpone or cancel events. Work closely with local public health officials to assess local capacities in the area. During a COVID-19 outbreak, resource limitations among local healthcare systems and/or law enforcement can influence the decision to postpone or cancel your events. If possible, plan alternative ways for participants to enjoy the events by television, radio, or online.

Communicate about COVID-19



Stay informed about the local COVID-19 situation. Get [up-to-date information](#) about local COVID-19 activity from public health officials. Be aware of temporary school dismissals in your area because these may affect event staff.

Note: Early in the outbreak, local public health officials may recommend [schools dismiss temporarily](#).



Update and distribute timely and accurate emergency communication information. Identify everyone in your chain of communication (for example, event staff, participants, suppliers, vendors, and key community partners and stakeholders) and establish systems for sharing information with them. Maintain up-to-date contact information for everyone in the chain of communication. Identify platforms, such as a hotline, automated text messaging, and a website to help disseminate information. Update key community partners and stakeholders regularly. Share information about how you and the emergency operations coordinator or planning team for the venues are responding to the outbreak.



Identify and address potential language, cultural, and disability barriers associated with communicating COVID-19 information to event staff and participants. Information you share should be easily understood by everyone attending the events. Learn more about reaching people of diverse languages and cultures by visiting: [Know Your Audience](#). You also can learn more about communicating to staff in a crisis at: [Crisis Communications Plan](#)

Follow-up After a COVID-19 Outbreak has Ended

Remember, a COVID-19 outbreak could last for a long time. When public health officials determine that the outbreak has ended in your local community, work with them to identify criteria for scaling back COVID-19 prevention actions at your events. Base the criteria on slowing of the outbreak in your local area. If your events were cancelled, work with your venues to reschedule your events.

Evaluate the effectiveness of your emergency operations and communication plans



Meet with the emergency operations coordinator or planning team for your venues to discuss and note lessons learned. Gather feedback from event staff, participants (if possible), community partners, and stakeholders to improve plans. Identify any gaps in the plans and any needs you may have for additional resources.



Maintain and expand your planning team. Look for ways to expand community partnerships. Identify agencies or partners needed to help you prepare for infectious disease outbreaks in the future and try to add them to your planning team.



Participate in community-wide emergency preparedness activities.

COVID-19 Readiness Resources

- Visit [cdc.gov/COVID19](https://www.cdc.gov/COVID19) for the latest information and resources about COVID-19
- [COVID 2019 Situation Summary](#)
- [Prevention and Treatment](#)
- [What to Do If You Are Sick](#)
- [Pregnant Women and COVID-19 FAQs](#)
- [FAQs: Coronavirus Disease-2019 \(COVID-19\) and Children](#)
- [Handwashing: A Family Activity](#)
- [Handwashing: Clean Hands Save Lives](#)

CDC Interim Guidance for Specific Audiences

- [Get Your Household Ready for Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Interim Guidance for Administrators of US Childcare Programs and K-12 Schools to Plan, Prepare, and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-2019\)](#)
- [Interim Guidance for Administrators of US Institutions of Higher Education \(IHE\) to Plan, Prepare, and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Interim Guidance for Travelers](#)

CDC Communication Resources

- [Interim Guidance: Public Health Communicators Get Your Community Ready for Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Print Resources](#)
- [Buttons and Badges](#)

Page last reviewed: May 7, 2020

Content source: [National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases \(NCIRD\)](#), [Division of Viral Diseases](#)